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LONDON: JOHN MILNE.

THE CALL OF THE SOUTH

BY

LOUIS BECKE

AUTHOR OF "HELEN ADAIR," "RODMAN THE BOATSTEERER," "BY REEF AND PALM," ETC.

LONDON

JOHN MILNE

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CHAPTER I

PAUL, THE DIVER

"FEELING any better to-day, Paul?"

"Guess I'm getting round," and the big, bronzed-faced man raised his eyes to mine as he lay under the awning on the after deck of his pearling lugger. I sat down beside him and began to talk.

A mile away the white beach of a little, land-locked bay shimmered under the morning sun, and the drooping fronds of the cocos hung listless and silent, waiting for the rising of the south-east trade.

"Paul," I said, "it is very hot here. Come on shore with me to the native village, where it is cooler, and I will make you a big drink of lime-juice."

I helped him to rise—for he was weak from a bad attack of New Guinea fever—and two of our native crew assisted him over the side into my whaleboat. A quarter of an hour later we were seated on mats under the shade of a great wild mango tree, drinking lime-juice and listening to the lazy hum of the surf upon the reef, and the soft *croo, croo* of many "crested" pigeons in the branches above.

The place was a little bay in Callie Harbour on Admiralty Island in the South Pacific; and Paul Fremont

was one of our European divers. I was in charge of the supply schooner which was tender to our fleet of pearling luggers, and was the one man among us to whom the silent, taciturn Paul would talk—sometimes.

And only sometimes, for usually Paul was too much occupied in his work to say more than "Good-morning, boss," or "Good night," when, after he had been disencumbered of his diving gear, he went aft to rest and smoke his pipe. But one day, however, he went down in twenty-six fathoms, stayed too long, and was brought up unconscious. The mate and I saw the signals go up for assistance, hurried on board his lugger, and were just in time to save his life.

Two days later he came on board the tender, shook hands in his silent, undemonstrative way, and held out for my acceptance an old octagon American fifty dollar gold piece.

"Got a gal, boss?"

I admitted that I had.

"Pure white, I mean. One thet you like well enough to marry?"

"I mean to try, Paul."

"In Samoa?"

"No—Australia."

"Guess I'd like you to give her this 'slug'. I got it outer the wreck of a ship that was sunk off Galveston in the 'sixties,' in the war."

It would have hurt him had I declined the gift. So I thanked him, and he nodded silently, filled his pipe and went back to the *Montiara*.

. . . . . .

Nearly a year passed before we met again, for his lugger and six others went to New Guinea; and our next meeting was at Callie Harbour, where I found him down with malarial fever. Again I became his doctor, and ordered him to lie up.

He nodded.

"Guess I'll have ter, boss. But I jest hate loafin' around and seein' the other divers bringin' up shell in easy water." For he was receiving eighty pounds per month wages—diving or no diving—and hated to be idle.

"Paul," I said, as we lay stretched out under the wild mango tree, "would you mind telling me about that turn-up you had with the niggers at New Ireland, six years ago."

"Ef you like, boss." Then he added that he did not care about talking much at any time, as he was a mighty poor hand at the jaw-tackle.

"We were startin' tryin' some new ground between New Hanover and the North Cape of New Ireland. There were only two luggers, and we had for our storeship a thirty-ton cutter. There were two white divers besides me and one Manila man, and our crews were all natives of some sort or another—Tokelaus, Manahikians and Hawaiians. The skipper of the storeship was a Dutchman—a chicken-hearted swab, who turned green at the sight of a nigger with a bunch of spears, or a club in his hand. He used to turn-in with a brace of pistols in his belt and a Winchester lying on the cabin table. At sea he would lose his funk, but whenever we dropped anchor and natives came aboard his teeth would

begin to chatter, and he would just jump at his own shadder.

"We anchored in six fathoms, and in an hour or two we came across a good patch of black-edge shell, and we began to get the boats and pumps ready to start regular next morning. As I was boss, I had moored the cutter in a well-sheltered nook under a high bluff, and the luggers near to her. So far we had not seen any sign of natives—not even smoke—but knew that there was a big village some miles away, out o' sight of us, an' that the niggers were a bad lot, and would have a try at cuttin' off if they saw a slant.

"Early next morning it set in to rain, with easterly squalls, and before long I saw that there was like to be a week of it, and that we should have to lie by and wait until it settled. About noon we sighted a dozen white lime-painted canoes bearing down on us, and Horn, the Dutchman, began to turn green as usual, and wanted me to heave up and clear out. I set on him and said I wanted the niggers to come alongside, an' hev a good look at us—they would see that we were a hard nut to crack if they meant mischief.

"They came alongside, six or eight greasy-haired bucks in each canoe—and asked for terbacker and knives in exchange for some pigs and yams. I let twenty or so of 'em come aboard, bought their provisions, and let 'em have a good look around. Their chief was a fat, bloated feller, with a body like a barrel, and his face pitted with small-pox. He told me that he was boss of all the place around us, and had some big plantations about a mile back in the bush, just abreast of us, and

that he would let me have all the food I wanted. In five days or so, he said, we should have fine weather for diving, and he and his crowd would help me all they could.

"About a quarter of a mile away was a rocky little island of about five acres in extent. It had a few heavy trees on it, but no scrub, and there were some abandoned fishermen's huts on the beach. I asked the fat hog if I could use it as a shore station to overhaul our boats and diving gear when necessary, and he agreed to let me use it as long as I liked for three hundred sticks of terbacker and two muskets.

"They went off on shore again to the plantations, and in a little while we saw smoke ascendin'—they were cookin' food, and repairing their huts. Later on in the day they sent me a canoe load of yams, taro, and other stuff for the men, and asked me to come ashore and look at the village. I went, fur I knew that they would not try on any games so soon.

"There were, in addition to the bucks, a lot of women and children there, makin' thatch, cookin', and repairin' the pig-proof fencin'. I stayed a bit, and then came on board again, an' we made snug for the night.

"Next morning we landed on the island, repaired two of the huts, and started mendin' sails, overhauling the boats, and doin' such work that it was easier to do on shore than on board. Of course we kep' our arms handy, and old Horn kep' a good watch on board—he dassent put foot on shore himself—said he was skeered o' fever.

"The natives sent us plenty of food, and a good many

of 'em loafed around on the island, and some on board the luggers and cutter, cadgin' fur terbacker and biscuit. Of course they always carried their clubs and spears with 'em, as is usual in New Ireland, but they were quiet and civil enough. Every day canoes were passin' from where we lay to the main village, and returnin' with other batches of bucks and women all takin' spells at work; an' there was any amount o' drum beating and *duk duk*[1] dancin', and old Horn shivered in his boots swearin' they were comin' to wipe us out. But my native crews and I and the other white divers were used to the nigger customs at such times, and although we kep' a good watch ashore and afloat, none o' us were afraid of any trouble comin'.

"On the fifth night, I, another white diver, named Docky Mason, his Samoan wife, and a Manahiki sailor named 'Star' were sleeping on shore in one of the huts. In another hut were three or four New Ireland niggers, who had brought us some fish and were going away again in the mornin'.

"About ten o'clock the sky became as black as ink—a heavy blow was comin' on, and we just had time to stow our loose gear up tidy, when the wind came down from between the mountains with a roar like thunder, and away went the roofs of the huts, and with it nearly everything around us that was not too heavy to be carried away. My own boat, which was lying on the beach, was lifted up bodily, sent flyin' into the water, and carried out to sea.

[1] The *duk duk* dance of Melanesia is merely a blackmailing ceremony by the men to obtain food from the women and the uninitiated.

"We tried to make out the cutter's and luggers' lights, but could see nothin', and every second the wind was yellin' louder and louder like forty thousand cats gone mad, and the air was filled with sticks, leaves, and sand, and I had a mighty great fear for my little fleet; fur three miles away to the west, there was a long stretch o' reefs, an' I was afraid they had dragged and would get mussed up.

"Thet's jest what did happen—though they cleared the reefs by the skin of their teeth. The moment they began to drag, all three slipped. The luggers stood away under the lee of New Ireland, stickin' in to the land, and tryin' to bring to for shelter, but they were a hundred miles away from me, down the coast, before they could bring-to and anchor, for the blow had settled into a hurricane, and raised such a fearful sea that they had to heave-to for twenty-four hours. It was two weeks before we met again, after they had had to tow and 'sweep' back to my little island, against a dead calm and a strong current, gettin' a whiff of a land breeze at night now an' agin', which let 'em use their canvas. As for the cutter, she ran before it for New Britain, and brought up at Matupi in Blanche Bay, two hundred miles away, where old Horn knew there was a white settlement of Germans—his own kidney. He was a white-livered old swine, but a good sailor-man—as far as any man who says 'Ja' for 'Yes' goes.

"When daylight came my mates and I set to work to straighten up.

"Docky Mason's native wife—Tia—was a 'whole waggon with a yaller dog under the team'. She first

of all made us some hot coffee, and gave us a rousin' breakfast; then she made the New Ireland bucks—who were wantin' to swim to the mainland—turn to and put a new roof of coco-nut thatch over our hut, although it was still blowin' a ragin' gale. My! thet gal was a wonder! She hed eyes like stars, an' red lips an' shinin' pearly teeth, an' a tongue like a whip-lash when she got mad, an' Docky Mason uster let her talk to him as if he was a nigger—an' say nuthin'—excep' givin' a foolish laugh and then slouchin' off. And yet she was as gentle as a lamb to any of us fellows when we got fever, or had gone down under more'n twenty fathoms, and was hauled up three parts dead and chokin'.

"Well, boss, we got to straights at last, although it was blowin' as hard as ever. We had a lot o' gear on shore in that native house, for I was intendin' to beach the cutter an' give her copper a scrubbin' before we started divin' regular.

"There was near on a ton o' twist terbacker in tierces (which we used fur tradin' with the niggers), a ton o' biscuit in fifty pound tins, boxes o' red an' yaller seed beads, an' knives an' axes, an' a case o' dynamite, an' heaps o' things that was a direct invitation to the niggers, an' a challenge ter the Almighty to hev our silly throats cut. And those four or five bucks, whilst Tia was hustlin' them around, was jest takin' stock as they worked.

"By sunfall the wind an' sea in the bay had gone down a bit; an' the bucks said that they would swim on shore (their canoe had been smashed in the night) and bring us some food early in the mornin'. I gave 'em a

bottle o' Hollands, an' my kind regards for the old barrelled-belly swine of a chief, some terbacker fur themselves; and then, after they had gone, looked to our Winchesters and pistols, which the bucks hadn't seen, fur we always kept 'em outer sight, under our sleepin' mats.

"'Paulo,' sez Tia to me, speakin' in Samoan (an' cussin' in English), 'you an' Docky an' "Star" are a lot o' blamed fools! You orter hev shot all those bucks ez soon ez they hed finished. Didn't you say that, "Star"?'

"'Star' had said 'Yes' to her, but being an unobtrusive sorter o' Kanaka, he hadn't said nuthin' to us—thinkin' we knew better'n him what ter do.

"We kep' a good watch all that day an' the nex' day, and then at sunset two bucks in a canoe came off, bringing us six cooked pigeons from the chief, with a message that he would come an' see us in a day or two, and bring men to build us better houses to live in until the luggers and the cutter came back.

"We collared the two bucks and tied 'em up, and then Tia made one of 'em eat part of a pigeon—she standin' over him with a Winchester at his ear. He ate it, an' in ten minutes he was tyin' himself up in knots, and was a dead nigger in another quarter of an hour. The pigeons were all poisoned.

"We kep' the other nigger alive an' told him that if he would tell us what was a-goin' on we'd let him off, and set him ashore, free.

"'At dawn to-morrow,' says he, 'Baian' (the fat old chief) 'thought to find you all dead, because of the

poisoned pigeons sent to you. And then he meant to take all the good things you have here, and set up your heads in his *duk duk* house.'

"Before daylight came, Docky Mason an' 'Star' an' me hed fixed up things all serene ter give Baian and his cannibals a doin'. Fust ev all—to show our prisoner that we meant business, Tia held up his right hand, an' Docky sent a Winchester bullet through it, an' told him that he would send one through his skull ef he didn't do what he was told.

"Then we took two empty one gallon colza oil tins, and filled 'em with dynamite, tamped it down tight, and then ran short fuses through the corks, and carried 'em down to the place where our prisoner said Baian and his crowd would land. It was a little bay, lined on each side by pretty high, ragged coral boulders, covered with creepers. We stowed the tins in readiness, and then brought our prisoner down, and told him what to do when the time came. I guess thet thet nigger knew thet ef he didn't play straight he was a dead coon. Tia sat down jest behind him, and every now and then touched his backbone with the muzzle ev her pistol—jest ter show him she was keepin' awake. At the same time he wasn't unwillin', for he hed told us thet he and his dead mate were not Baian's men—they were slaves he had captured from a town he had raided somewhere near North Cape, and they were liable to be killed and eaten at any time if Baian's crowd ran short of pig meat or turtle.

"A little bit higher up, Docky Mason, 'Star' an' me, planted ourselves with our Winchesters, an' one of our

boats' whaler's bomb guns, which fired four pounds of slugs and deer shot, mixed up—the sorter thing, boss, thet you an' me may find mighty handy here in this very place, if we get rushed sudden. We made a charcoal fire, and then frayed out the ends of the dynamite fuses so thet they would light quickly.

"When daylight came, we caught sight of nigh on fifty canoes, all crammed with niggers, paddlin' like blazes to where we was cachêd, but making no noise. Even if they hed we would not hev heard it, fur the wind and the surf beatin' on the reef would hev drowned it.

"On they came and rushed their canoes into the little cove, four abreast, and Tia prodded our buck in the back, and told him to stand up and talk to Baian, who was in one of the leadin' canoes.

"Up he jumps.

"'Oh, Baian, Baian, great Baian,' he called, 'the two white men are dead in their house, and we have the woman bound hand and foot.'

"'Good,' said Baian with a fat chuckle, as he put one leg over the gunwale of his canoe to step out, and the next moment I put a bullet through him, and then Docky Mason lit the first charge o' dynamite, and slings it down, right inter the middle of the crowded canoes, and before it went off he sent the second one after it.

"Boss, I hev seen some dynamite explosions in my time—especially when I hev hed to blow up wrecks—but I hev never seen anything like thet. The two shots killed over thirty niggers, wounded as many more, and stunned a lot, who were drowned. Those who were not

hurt swam out of the cove, and neither Docky nor me had the heart to shoot any of 'em—though we might hev picked off a couple of dozen afore they got outer range.

"Before we could stop him our prisoner jumped down among the dead and wounded, got a long knife, an' in ten seconds he had Baian's head off, and held it up to us, grinning like a cat, on'y not so nice, ez he hed jet black, betel-nut stained teeth, and red lips like a piece ev raw beef.

"We hed no more trouble with the niggers after thet turn-up, you can bet yer life.

"The buck stayed with us until the luggers came back, and a few days after we landed him at his own village—ez rich ez Jay Gould, for we gave him a musket with powder and ball, a cutlass, half a dozen pounds ev red beads, and two hundred sticks of terbacker. I guess thet thet nigger was able to buy himself all the wives he wanted, and be a 'big Injun' fur the end of his days."

CHAPTER II

THE OLD SEA LIFE

ONE Sunday morning—when I was about to leave the dear old city of Sydney for an unpremeditated and long, long absence in cold northern climes, I went for a farewell stroll around the Circular Quay, and, standing on some high ground on the east side, looked down on the mass of shipping below, flying the flags of all nations, and ranging from a few hundred to ten thousand tons. Mail steamers, deep sea tramps, "freezers," colliers—all crowded together, and among them but *one* single sailing vessel—a Liverpool barque of 1,000 tons, loading wool. She looked lost, abandoned, out of place, and my heart went out to her as my eyes travelled from her shapely lines and graceful sheer, to her lofty spars, tapering yards, and curving jibboom, the end of the latter almost touching the stern rail of an ugly bloated-looking German tramp steamer of 8,000 tons.

On that very spot where I stood I, when a boy, had played at the foot of lofty trees—now covered by hideous ill-smelling wool stores—and had seen lying at the Circular Quay fifty or sixty noble full-rigged ships

and barques, many brigs and schooners, and but *one* steamer, a handsome brig-rigged craft, the *Avoca*, the monthly P. and O. boat, which ran from Sydney to Melbourne to connect with a larger ship.

Round the point were certainly a few other steamers, old-fashioned heavily-rigged men-of-war, generally paddle-wheel craft; and, out of sight, in Darling Harbour, a mile away, were others—coasters—none of them reaching five hundred tons, and all either barque- or brig-rigged, as was then the fashion.

And they all, sailers as well as the few steamers, were manned by *sailor-men*, not by gangs of foreign paint-scrubbers, who generally form a steamer's crew of the present day—men who could no more handle a bit of canvas than a cow could play the Wedding March—in fact there are thousands of men nowadays earning wages on British ships as A.B.'s who have never touched canvas except in the shape of tarpaulin hatch covers, and whom it would be highly dangerous to put at the wheel of a sailing ship—they would make a wreck of her in any kind of a breeze in a few minutes.

In my boyhood days, nearly all the ships that came into Sydney Harbour flying British colours were manned by men of British blood. Foreigners, as a rule, were not liked by shipmasters, and their British shipmates in the fo'c'stle resented their presence. One reason of this was that they would always "ship" at a lower rate of wage than Englishmen, and were clannish. I have known of captains of favourite clipper passenger ships, trading between London and the colonies, declining to ship a foreigner, even an English-speaking

Dane or Scandinavian, who make good sailor-men, and are quiet, sober, and hardworking. Nowadays it is difficult to find any English deep-sea ship or steamer, in which half of the hands for'ard are not foreigners of some sort. And now practically the whole coasting mercantile marine of the Australian colonies is manned by Germans, Swedes, Danes, and Norwegians.

When I was a young man I sailed in ships in the South Sea trade which had carried the same crew, voyage after voyage, for years, and there was a distinct feeling of comradeship existing between officers and crew that does not now exist. I well remember one gallant ship, the *All Serene* (a happy name), which was for ten years in the Sydney-China trade. She was about the first colonial vessel to adopt double-top-gallant yards, and many wise-heads prophesied all sorts of dire mishaps from the innovation. On this ship (she was full rigged) was a crew of nineteen men, and the majority of them had sailed in her for eight years, although her captain was a bit of a "driver". But they got good wages, good food, and had a good ship under their feet—a ship with a crack record as a fast sailer.

In contrast to the *All Serene*, was a handsome barque I once sailed in as a passenger from Sydney to New Caledonia, where she was to load nickel ore for Liverpool. Her captain and three mates were Britishers, and smart sailor-men enough, the steward was a Chileno, the bos'un a Swede; carpenter a Mecklenburger joiner (who, when told to repair the fore-scuttle, which had been damaged by a heavy sea, did not know where it was situated), the sailmaker a German, and of the twelve

A.B.'s and O.S.'s only one—a man of sixty-five years of age, was a Britisher; the rest were of all nationalities. Three of them were Scandinavians and were good sailor-men, the others were almost useless, and only fit to scrub paint-work, and hardly one could be trusted at the wheel. The cook was a Martinique nigger, and was not only a good cook, but a thorough seaman, and he had the utmost contempt for what he called "dem mongrels for'ard," especially those who were Dagoes. The captain and officers certainly had reason to knock the crew about, for during an electrical storm one night the ship was visited by St. Elmo's fire, and the Dagoes to a man refused duty, and would not go aloft, being terrified out of their wits at the dazzling globes of fire running along the yards, hissing and dancing, and illuminating the ocean for miles. They bolted below, rigged up an altar and cross with some stump ends of candles, and began to pray. Exasperated beyond endurance, the captain, officers, two Norwegians, the nigger cook and I, after having shortened canvas, "went" for them, knocked the religious paraphernalia to smithereens, and drove them on deck.

The nigger cook was really a devout Roman Catholic, but his seaman's soul revolted at their cowardice, and he so far lost his temper as to seize a Portuguese by his black curly hair, throw him down, tear open his shirt, and seize a leaden effigy of St. Jago do Compostella, which he wore round his neck, and thrust it into his mouth. In after years I saw Captain "Bully" Hayes do the same thing, also with a Portuguese sailor; but Hayes made the man actually swallow the little image—after

he had rolled it into a rough ball—saying that if St. James was so efficient to externally protect the wearer from dangers of the sea, that he could do it still better in the stomach, where he (the saint) would feel much warmer.

The barque, a month or so after I left her in Nouméa, sailed from T'chio in New Caledonia, and was never heard of again. She was overmasted, and I have no doubt but that she capsized, and every one on board perished. Had she been manned by English sailors, she would have reached her destination in safety, for the captain and officers knew her faults and that she was a tricky ship to sail with an unreliable crew.

In many ships in which I have sailed, in my younger days, no officer considered it *infra dig.* for him, when not on watch, to go for'ard and listen to some of the hands spinning yarns, especially when the subject of their discourse turned upon matters of seamanship, the eccentricities either of a ship herself or of her builders, etc. This unbending from official dignity on the part of an officer was rarely abused by the men—especially by the better-class sailor-man. He knew that "Mr. Smith" the chief officer who was then listening to his yarns and perhaps afterwards spinning one himself, would in a few hours become a different man when it was his watch on deck, and probably ask Tom Jones, A.B., what the blazes he meant by crawling aft to relieve the wheel like an old woman with palsy. And Jones, A.B., would grin with respectful diffidence, hurry his steps and bear no malice towards his superior.

Such incidents never occur now. There is no feeling

of comradeship between officer and "Jack". Each distrusts the other.

I have not had much experience of steamers in the South Sea trade, except as a passenger—most of my voyages having been made in sailing craft, but on one occasion my firm had to charter a steamer for six months, owing to the ship of which I was supercargo undergoing extensive repairs.

The steamer, in addition to a general cargo, also carried 500 tons of coal for the use of a British warship, engaged in "patrolling" the Solomon Islands, and I was told to "hurry along". The ship's company were all strangers to me, and I saw at once I should not have a pleasant time as supercargo. The crew were mostly alleged Englishmen, with a sprinkling of foreigners, and the latter were a useless, lazy lot of scamps. The engine-room staff were worse, and the captain and mate seemed too terrified of them to bring them to their bearings. They (the crew) were a bad type of "wharf rats," and showed such insolence to the captain and mate that I urged both to put some of them in irons for a few days. The second mate was the only officer who showed any spirit, and he and I naturally stood together, agreeing to assist each other if matters became serious, for the skipper and mate were a thoroughly white-livered pair.

Just off San Cristoval, the firemen came to me, and asked me to sell them a case of Hollands gin. I refused, and said one bottle was enough at a time. They threatened to break into the trade-room, and help themselves. I said that they would do so at their own peril—

the first man that stepped through the doorway would get hurt. They retired, cursing me as a "mean hound". The skipper said nothing. He, I am glad to say, was not an Englishman, though he claimed to be. He was a Dane.

Arriving at a village on the coast of San Cristoval, where I had to land stores for a trader, we found a rather heavy surf on, and the crew refused to man a boat and take me on shore, on the plea that it was too dangerous; a native boat's crew would have smiled at the idea of danger, and so also would any white sailorman who was used to surf work.

Two days later, through their incapacity, they capsized a boat by letting her broach-to in crossing a reef, and a hundred pounds' worth of trade goods were lost.

When we met the cruiser for whom the coals were destined, the second mate and I told the commander in the presence of our own skipper that we considered the latter unfit to have command of the steamer.

"Then put the mate in charge, if you consider your captain is incapable," said the naval officer.

"The mate is no better," I said, "he is as incapable as the captain."

"Then the second mate is the man."

"I cannot navigate, sir," said the second mate.

The naval commander drew me aside, and we took "sweet counsel" together. Then he called our ruffianly scallywags of a crew on to the main deck, eyed them up and down, and ignoring our captain, asked me how many pairs of handcuffs were on board.

"Two only," I replied.

"Then I'll send you half a dozen more. Clap 'em on to some of these fellows for a week, until they come to their senses."

In half an hour the second mate and I had the satisfaction of seeing four firemen and four A.B.'s in irons, which they wore for a week, living on biscuit and water.

A few weeks later I engaged, on my own responsibility, ten good native seamen, and for the rest of the voyage matters went fairly well, for the captain plucked up courage, and became valorous when I told him that my natives would make short work of their white shipmates, if the latter again became mutinous.

Against this experience I have had many pleasant ones. In one dear old brig, in which I sailed as supercargo for two years, we carried a double crew—white men and natives of Rotumah Island, and a happier ship never spread her canvas to the winds of the Pacific. This was purely because the officers were good men, the hands—white and native—good seamen, cheerful and obedient—not the lazy, dirty, paint-scrubbers one too often meets with nowadays, especially on cheaply run big four-masted sailing ships, flying the red ensign of Old England.

CHAPTER III

THE BLIND MAN OF ADMIRALTY ISLAND

WE had had a stroke—or rather a series of strokes—of very bad luck. Our vessel, the *Metaris*, had been for two months cruising among the islands of what is now known as the Bismarck Archipelago, in the North-western Pacific. We had twice been on shore, once on the coast of New Ireland, and once on an unknown and uncharted reef between that island and St. Matthias Island. Then, on calling at one of our trading stations at New Hanover where we intended to beach the vessel for repairs, we found that the trader had been killed, and of the station house nothing remained but the charred centre-post—it had been reduced to ashes. The place was situated on a little palm-clad islet not three hundred acres in extent, and situated a mile or two from the mainland, and abreast of a village containing about four hundred natives, under whose protection our trader and his three Solomon Island labourers were living, as the little island belonged to them, and we had placed the trader there on account of its suitability, and also because the man particularly wished to be quite

apart from the village, fearing that his Solomon Islanders would get themselves into trouble with the people.

From the excited natives, who boarded us even before we had dropped anchor, we learned that about a month after we had left poor Chantrey on his little island a large party of marauding St. Matthias Island savages, in ten canoes, had suddenly appeared and swooped down upon the unfortunate white man and his labourers and slaughtered all four of them; then after loading their canoes with all the plunder they could carry, they set fire to the house and Chantrey's boat, and made off again within a few hours.

This was a serious blow to us; for not only had we to deplore the cruel death of one of our best and most trusted traders, but Chantrey had a large stock of trade goods, a valuable boat, and had bought over five hundred pounds' worth of coco-nut oil and pearl-shell from the New Hanover natives,—all this had been consumed. However, it was of no use for us to grieve, we had work to do that was of pressing necessity, for the *Metaris* was leaking badly and had to be put on the beach as quickly as possible whilst we had fine weather. This, with the assistance of the natives, we at once set about and in the course of a few days had effected all the necessary repairs, and then steered westward for Admiralty Island, calling at various islands on our way, trading with the wild natives for coco-nut oil, copra, ivory nuts, pearl-shell and tortoise-shell, and doing very poorly; for a large American schooner, engaged in the same business, had been ahead of us, and at most of the islands we touched at we secured nothing

more than a few hundredweight of black-edged pearl-shell. Then, to add to our troubles, two of our native crew were badly wounded in an attack made on a boat's crew who were sent on shore to cut firewood on what the skipper and I thought to be a chain of small uninhabited islands. This was a rather serious matter, for not only were the captain and boatswain ill with fever, but three of the crew as well.

For a week we worked along the southern coast of Admiralty Island, calling at a number of villages and obtaining a considerable quantity of very good pearl-shell from the natives. But it was a harassing time, for having seven sick men on board we never dared to come to an anchor for fear of the savage and treacherous natives attempting to capture the ship. As it was, we had to keep a sharp look-out to prevent more than two canoes coming alongside at once, and then only when there was a fair breeze, so that we could shake them off if their occupants showed any inclination for mischief. We several times heard some of these gentry commenting on the ship being so short-handed, and this made us unusually careful, for although those of us who were well never moved about unarmed we could not have beaten back a sudden rush.

At last, however, both Manson and the boatswain, and one of the native sailors became so ill that the former decided to make a break in the cruise and let all hands—sick and well—have a week's spell at a place he knew of, situated at the west end of the great island; and so one day we sailed the *Metaris* into a quiet little bay, encompassed by lofty well-wooded hills,

and at the head of which was a fine stream of fresh water.

"We shall soon pull ourselves together in this place," said Manson to Loring (the mate) and me. "I know this little bay well, though 'tis six years since I was last here. There are no native villages within ten miles at least, and we shall be quite safe, so we need only keep an anchor watch at night. Man the boat, there. I must get on shore right away. I am feeling better already for being here. Which of you fellows will come with me for a bit of a look round?"

I, being the supercargo, was, for the time, an idle man, but made an excuse of "wanting to overhaul" my trade-room—always a good standing excuse with most supercargoes—as I wanted Loring to have a few hours on shore; for although he was free of fever he was pretty well run down with overwork. So, after some pressure, he consented, and a few minutes later he and Manson were pulled on shore, and I watched them land on the beach, just in front of a clump of wild mango trees in full bearing, almost surrounded by groves of lofty coco-nut palms. A little farther on was an open, grassy space on which grew some wide-branched white cedar trees.

About an hour afterwards Loring returned on board, and told me that Manson had gone on alone to what he described as "a sweet little lake". It was only a mile away, and he thought of having a leaf house built there for the sick men and himself, and wanted Loring to come and have a look at it, but the mate declined, pleading his wish to get back to the ship and unbend our canvas.

"As you will," said Manson to him. "I shall be all right. I'll shoot some pigeons and cockatoos by-and-by, and bring them down to the beach. And after you have unbent the canvas, you can take the seine to the mouth of the creek and fill the boat with fish." Then, gun on shoulder, he walked slowly away into the verdant and silent forest.

After unbending our canvas, we went to dinner; and then leaving Loring in charge of the ship, the boatswain, two hands and myself went on shore with the seine to the mouth of the creek, and in a very short time netted some hundreds of fish much resembling the European shad.

Just as we were about to push off, I heard Manson's hail close to, and looking round, nearly lost my balance and fell overboard in astonishment—he was accompanied by a woman.

Springing out of the boat, I ran to meet them.

"Mrs. Hollister," said the captain, "this is my supercargo. As soon as we get on board I will place you in his hands, and he will give you all the clothing you want at present for yourself and your little girl," and then as, after I had shaken hands with the lady, I stood staring at him for an explanation, he smiled.

"I'll tell you Mrs. Hollister's strange story by-and-by, old man. Briefly it is this—she, her husband, and their little girl have been living here for over two years. Their vessel was castaway here. Now, get into the boat, please, Mrs. Hollister."

The woman, who was weeping silently with excite-

ment, smiled through her tears, stepped into the boat, and in a few minutes we were alongside.

"Make all the haste you can," Manson said to me, "as Mrs. Hollister is returning on shore as soon as you can give her some clothing and boots or shoes. Then they are all coming on board to supper at eight o'clock."

The lady came with me to my trade-room, and we soon went to work together, I forbearing to ask her any questions whatever, though I was as full of curiosity as a woman. Like that of all trading vessels whose "run" embraced the islands of Polynesia as well as Melanesia and Micronesia, the trade-room of the *Metaris* was a general store. The shelves and cases were filled with all sorts of articles—tinned provisions, wines and spirits, firearms and ammunition, hardware and drapers' soft goods, "yellow-back" novels, ready-made clothing for men, women and children, musical instruments and grindstones—in fact just such a stock as one would find in a well-stocked general store in an Australian country town.

In half an hour Mrs. Hollister had found all that she wanted, and packing the articles in a "trade" chest, I had it passed on deck and lowered into the boat. Then the lady, now smiling radiantly, shook hands with every one, including the steward, and descended to the boat which quickly cast off and made for the shore in charge of the boatswain.

Then I felt that I deserved a drink, and went below again where Manson and Loring were awaiting me. They had anticipated my wishes, for the steward had just placed the necessary liquids on the cabin table.

"Now, boys," said the skipper, as he opened some soda water, "after we have had a first drink I'll spin my yarn—and a sad enough one it is, too. By-the-way, steward, did you put that bottle of brandy and some soda water in the boat?"

"Yes, sir."

"That's all right. Just fancy, you fellows—that poor chap on shore has not had a glass of grog for more than two years. That is, I suppose so. Anyway I am sending him some. And, I say, steward; I want you to spread yourself this evening and give us *the* very best supper you ever gave us. There are three white persons coming at eight o'clock. And I daresay they will sleep on board, so get ready three spare bunks."

Manson was usually a slow, drawling speaker—except when he had occasion to admonish the crew; then he was quite brilliant in the rapidity of his remarks—but now he was clearly a little excited and seemed to have shaken the fever out of his bones, for he not only drank his brandy and soda as if he enjoyed it, but asked the steward to bring him his pipe. This latter request was a sure sign that he was getting better. Then he began his story.

. . . . . .

Although six years had passed since he had visited this part of the great island, Manson knew his way inland to the lake. The forest was open, and consisted of teak and cedar with but little undergrowth. Suddenly, as he was passing under the spreading branches of a great cedar, he saw something that made him

stare with astonishment—a little white girl, driving before her a flock of goats! She was dressed in a loose gown of blue print, and wore an old-fashioned white linen sun-bonnet, and her bare legs and feet were tanned a deep brown. Only for a moment did he see her face as she faced towards him to hurry up a playful kid that had broken away from the flock, and then her back was again turned, and she went on, quite unaware of his presence.

"Little girl," he called.

Something like a cry of terror escaped her lips as she turned to him.

"Oh, sir," she cried in trembling tones, "you frightened me."

"I am so sorry, my dear. Who are you? Where do you live?"

"Just by the lake, sir, with my father and mother."

"May I come with you and see them?"

"Oh, yes, sir. We have never seen any one since we came here more than two years ago. When did you come, sir?"

"Only this morning. My vessel is anchored in the little cove."

"Oh, I am so glad, so glad! My father and mother too will be so glad to meet you. But he cannot see you—I mean see you with his eyes—for he is blind. When our ship was wrecked here the lightning struck him, and took away his eyesight."

Deeply interested as he was, Manson forbore to question the child any further, and walked beside her in silence till they came in view of the lake.

"Look, sir, there is our house. Mother and Fiji Sam, the sailor, built it, and I helped. Isn't it nice? See, there are my father and mother waiting for me."

On the margin of a lovely little lake, less than a mile in circumference, was a comfortably built house, semi-native, semi-European in construction, and surrounded by a garden of gorgeous-hued coleus, crotons, and other indigenous plants, and even the palings which enclosed it were of growing saplings, so evenly trimmed as to resemble an ivy-grown wall.

Seated in front of the open door were a man and woman. The latter rose and came to meet Manson, who raised his hat as the lady held out her hand, and he told her who he was.

"Come inside," she said, in a soft, pleasant voice. "This is my husband, Captain Hollister. Our vessel was lost on this island twenty-eight months ago, and you are the first white man we have seen since then."

The blind man made his visitor welcome, but without effusion, and begged him to be seated. What especially struck Manson was the calm, quiet manner of all three. They received him as if they were used to seeing strangers, and betrayed no unusual agitation. Yet they were deeply thankful for his coming. The house consisted of three rooms, and had been made extremely comfortable by articles of cabin furniture. The table was laid for breakfast, and as Manson sat down, the little girl hurriedly milked a goat, and brought in a small gourd of milk. In a few minutes Hollister's slight reserve had worn off, and he related his strange story.

His vessel (of which he was owner) was a topsail

schooner of 130 tons, and had sailed from Singapore in a trading cruise among the Pacific Islands. For the first four months all went well. Many islands had been visited with satisfactory results, and then came disaster, swift and terrible. Hollister told of it in few and simple words.

"We were in sight of this island and in the middle watch were becalmed. The night was close and sultry, and we had made all ready for a blow of some sort. For two hours we waited, and then in an instant the whole heavens were alight with chain and fork lightning. My Malay crew bolted below, and as they reached the fore-scuttle, two of them were struck dead, and flames burst out on the fore-part of the ship. I sprang forward, and was half-way along the deck, when I, too, was struck down. For an hour I was unconscious, and when I revived knew that my sight was gone for ever.

"My mate was a good seaman, but old and wanting in nerve. Still, with the aid of some of the terrified crew, and amidst a torrential downpour of rain which almost immediately began to fall, he did what he could to save the ship. In half an hour the rain ceased, and then the wind came with hurricane force from the southward; the crew again bolted, and refused to come on deck, and the poor mate in trying to heave-to was washed away from the wheel, together with the Malay serang—the only man who stuck to him. There were now left on board alive four Malays, one Fijian A.B. named Sam, my wife and child and myself. And I, of course, was helpless.

"'Fiji Sam' was a plucky fellow. Aided by my

wife, he succeeded in putting the schooner before the wind and letting her drive to the N.N.W., feeling sure that she would be giving the land a wide berth. Unfortunately he did not count upon a four-knot current setting to the eastward, and just as daylight was breaking we tore clean over the reef at high water into a little bay two miles from here. The water was so deep, and the place so sheltered, that the schooner drifted in among the branches of the trees lining the beach, and lay there as quiet as if she were moored to a wharf.

"Two days later the Malays seized the dinghy, taking with them provisions and arms, and deserted me. What became of them I do not know.

"Fiji Sam found this lake, and here we built this house, after removing all that we could from the ship, for she was leaking, and settled down upon her keel. She is there still, but of no use.

"When we ran ashore we had in the hold some goats and pigs, which I had bought at Anchorites' Island. The goats kept with us, but the pigs went wild, and took to the bush. In endeavouring to shoot one, poor Fiji Sam lost his life—his rifle caught in a vine and went off, the bullet passing through his body.

"Not once since the wreck have we seen a single native, though on clear days we often see smoke about fifteen miles along the coast. Anyway, none have come near us—for which I am very glad."

Manson remarked that that was fortunate as they were "a bad lot".

"So we have been living here quietly for over two

years. Twice only have we seen a sail, but only on the horizon. And I, having neither boat nor canoe, and being blind, was helpless."

. . . . . .

"That is the poor fellow's story," concluded Manson. "Of course I will give them a passage to Levuka, and we must otherwise do our best for them. Although Hollister has lost every penny he had in the world, his wife tells me that she owns some property in Singapore, where she also has a brother who is in business there. By Jove, boys, I wish you had been with me when I said 'Thank God, I have found you, Captain Hollister,' and the poor fellow sighed and turned his face away as he held out his hand to me, and his wife drew him to her bosom."

CHAPTER IV

NISĀN ISLAND; A TALE OF THE OLD TRADING DAYS

WHEN I was first learning the ropes as a "recruiter" in the Kanaka labour trade, recruiting natives to work on the plantations of Samoa and Fiji, we called at a group of islands called Nisān by the natives, and marked on the chart as the Sir Charles Hardy Islands. I thought it likely that I might obtain a few "recruits," and the captain wanted fresh provisions.

The group lies between the south end of New Ireland and the north end of the great Bougainville Island in the Solomon Archipelago, and consists of six low, well-wooded and fertile islands, enclosed within a barrier reef, forming a noble atoll, almost circular in shape. All the islands are thickly populated at the present day by natives, who are peaceable enough, and engage in *bêche-de-mer* and pearl-shell fishing. Less than forty years back they were notorious cannibals, and very warlike, and never hesitated to attempt to cut off any whaleship or trading vessel that was not well manned and well armed.

As I had visited the group on three previous occasions in a trading vessel and was well known to the

people, I was pretty sure of getting some "recruits" for Samoa, for our vessel had a good reputation. So, lowering our boats, the second mate and I went on shore, and were pleasantly received. But, alas for my hopes! I could not get a single native to recruit. They were, they said, now doing so well at curing *bêche-de-mer* for a Sydney trading vessel that none of the young men cared to leave the island to work on a plantation for three years; in addition to this, never before had food been so plentiful—pigs and poultry abounded, and turtle were netted by hundreds at a time. In proof of their assertion as to the abundance of provisions, I bought from them, for trade goods worth about ten dollars, a boat-load of turtle, pigs, ducks, fowls, eggs and fish. These I sent off to the ship by the second mate, and told him to return for another load of bread-fruit, taro, and other vegetables and fruit. I also sent a note to the captain by my own boat, telling him to come on shore and bring our guns and plenty of cartridges, as the islands were alive with countless thousands of fine, heavy pigeons, which were paying the group their annual visit from the mountainous forests of Bougainville Island and New Ireland. They literally swarmed on a small uninhabited island, covered with bread-fruit and other trees, and used by the natives as a sort of pleasure resort.

The two boats returned together, and leaving the second mate to buy more pigs and turtle—for we had eighty-five "recruits" on board to feed, as well as the ship's company of twenty-eight persons—the skipper and I started off in my boat for the little island, ac-

companied by several young Nisān "bucks" carrying old smooth-bore muskets, for they, too, wanted to join in the sport. I had given them some tins of powder, shot, and a few hundred military caps. We landed on a beautiful white beach, and telling our boat's crew to return to the village and help the second mate, the skipper and I, with the Nisān natives, walked up the bank, and in a few minutes the guns were at work. Never before had I seen such thousands of pigeons in so small an area. It could hardly be called sport, for the birds were so thick on the trees that when a native fired at haphazard into the branches the heavy charge of shot would bring them down by the dozen—the remainder would simply fly off to the next tree. Owing to the dense foliage the skipper and I seldom got a shot at them on the wing, and had to slaughter like the natives, consoling ourselves with the fact that every bird would be eaten. Most of them were so fat that it was impossible to pluck them without the skin coming away, and from the boat-load we took on board the skip's cook obtained a ten-gallon keg full of fat.

About noon we ceased, to have something to eat and drink, and chose for our camp a fairly open spot, higher than the rest of the island, and growing on which were some magnificent trees, bearing a fruit called *vi*. It is in reality a wild mango, but instead of containing the smooth oval-shaped seed of the mango family, it has a round, root-like and spiky core. The fruit, however, is of a delicious flavour, and when fully ripe melts in one's mouth. Whilst our native

friends were grilling some birds, and getting us some young coco-nuts to drink, the captain and I, taking some short and heavy pieces of wood, began throwing them at the ripe fruit overhead. Suddenly my companion tripped over something and fell.

"Hallo, what is this?" he exclaimed, as he rose and looked at the cause of his mishap.

It was the end of a bar of pig-iron ballast, protruding some inches out of the soft soil. We worked it to and fro, and then pulled it out. Wondering how it came there, we left it and resumed our stick-throwing, when we discovered three more on the other side of the tree; they were lying amid the ruins of an old wall, built of coral-stone slabs. We questioned the natives as to how these "pigs" came to be there. They replied that, long before their time, a small vessel had come into the lagoon and anchored, and that the crew had thrown the bars of iron overboard. After the schooner had sailed away, the natives had dived for and recovered the iron, and had tried to soften the bars by fire in the hope of being able to turn it into axes, etc.

We accepted the story as true, and thought no more about it, though we wondered why such useful, compact and heavy ballast should be thrown away, and when my boat returned to take us to the ship, we took the iron "pigs" with us.

Arriving at Samoa, we soon rid ourselves of our eighty-five "blackbirds," who had all behaved very well on the voyage, and were sorry to leave the ship; and that evening I paid a visit to an old friend of mine—an American who kept a large store in Apia, the prin-

cipal port and town of Samoa. I was telling him all about our cruise, when an old white man, locally known as "Bandy Tom," came up from the yard, and sat down on the verandah steps near us. Old Tom was a character, and well known all over Polynesia as an inveterate old loafer and beachcomber. He was a deserter from the navy, and for over forty years had wandered about the South Pacific, sometimes working honestly for a living, sometimes dishonestly, but usually loafing upon some native community, until they tired of him and made him seek fresh pastures. In his old age he had come to Samoa, and my friend, taking pity on the penniless old wreck, gave him employment as night watchman, and let him hang about the premises and do odd jobs in the day-time. With all his faults he was an amusing ancient, and was known for his "tall" yarns about his experiences with cannibals in Fiji.

Bidding me "good-evening," Bandy Tom puffed away at his pipe, and listened to what I was saying. When I had finished describing our visit to Nisān, and the finding of the ballast, he interrupted.

"I can tell you where them 'pigs' come from, and all about 'em—leastways a good deal; for I knows more about the matter than any one else."

Parker laughed. "Bandy, you know, or pretend to know, about everything that has happened in the South Seas since the time of Captain Cook."

"Ah, you can laugh as much as you like, boss," said the old fellow serenely, "but I know what I'm talkin' about. I ain't the old gas-bag you think I am. I lived

on Nisān for a year an' ten months, nigh on thirty years ago, gettin' *bêche-de-mer* for Captain Bobby Towns of Sydney." Then turning to me he added: "I ain't got too bad a memory, for all my age. I can tell you the names of all the six islands, an' how they lies, an' a good deal about the people an' the queer way they has of catchin' turtle in rope nets; an' I can tell you the names of the head men that was there in my time—which was about 'fifty or 'fifty-one. Just you try me an' see."

I did try him, and he very soon satisfied me that he had lived on the Sir Charles Hardy Islands, and knew the place well. Then he told his story, which I condense as much as possible.

PART I

Bandy was landed at Nisān by Captain Robert Towns of the barque *Adventurer* of Sydney, to collect *bêche-de-mer*. He was well received by the savage inhabitants and provided with a house, and well treated generally, for Captain Towns, knowing the natives to be cannibals and treacherous, had demanded a pledge from them that Bandy should not be harmed, and threatened that if on his return in the following year he found the white man was missing, he would land his crew, and destroy them to the last man. Then the barque sailed. A day or so afterwards Bandy was visited by a native, who was very different in appearance from the Nisān people. He spoke to the white man in good English, and informed him that he was a

native of the island of Rotumah, but had been living on Nisān for more than twenty years, had married, had a family, and was well thought of by the people. The two became great friends, and Taula, as the Rotumah man was named, took Bandy into his confidence, and told him of a tragedy that had occurred on Nisān about five or six years after he (Taula) had landed on the islands. He was one of the crew of a whaleship which, on a dark night, nearly ran ashore on Nisān, and in the hurry and confusion of the vessels going about he slipped over the side, swam on shore through the surf, and reached the land safely.

One day, said Taula, the natives were thrown into a state of wild excitement by the appearance of a brigantine, which boldly dropped anchor abreast of the principal village. She was the first vessel that had ever stopped at the islands, and the savage natives instantly planned to capture her and massacre the crew. But they resolved to first put the white men off their guard. Taula, however, did not know this at the time. With a number of the Nisān people he went on board, taking an ample supply of provisions. The brigantine had a large crew and was heavily armed, carrying ten guns, and the natives were allowed to board in numbers. The captain had with him his wife, whom Taula described as being quite a young girl. He questioned the natives about pearl-shell and *bêche-de-mer*, and a few hours later, by personal inspection, satisfied himself that the atoll abounded with both. He made a treaty with the apparently friendly people, and at once landed a party to build houses, etc.

I must now, for reasons that will appear later on, hurry over Taula's story as told by him to Bandy.

Eight or ten days after the arrival of the brigantine, the shore party of fourteen white men were treacherously attacked, and thirteen ruthlessly slaughtered. One who escaped was kept as a slave, and the brigantine, to avoid capture, hurriedly put to sea.

Six months or so passed, and the vessel again appeared and anchored, this time on a mission of vengeance. The natives, nevertheless, were not alarmed, and again determined to get possession of the ship, although this time her decks were crowded with men. They attacked her in canoes, were repulsed, returned to the shore and then, with incredible audacity, sent the white sailor whom they had captured on board the vessel to make peace. But not for a moment had they relinquished the determination to capture the vessel, which they decided to effect by treachery, if force could not be used. What followed was related in detail by Taula to Bandy.

Parker and I were deeply interested in Bandy's story, and at its conclusion I asked him if his informant knew the name of the ship and her nationality.

"Not her name, sir; but she was an American. Taula knew the American flag, for the ship he ran away from was a Sag harbour whaler. The pig-iron bars which you found were brought ashore to make a bed for the *bêche-de-mer* curing pots. He showed 'em to me one day."

Both Parker and I were convinced of the truth of Bandy's story, and came to the conclusion that the un-

known brigantine was probably a colonial trader, which had afterwards been lost with all hands. For we were both fairly well up in the past history of the South Seas—at least we thought so—and had never heard of this affair at the Sir Charles Hardy Group. But we were entirely mistaken in our assumptions.

In the month of April in the year 1906, after a lapse of more than five and twenty years, the mystery that enshrouded the tragedy of Nisān was revealed to me by my coming across, in a French town, a small, time-stained and faded volume of 230 pages, and published by J. and J. Harper of New York in 1833, and entitled *Narrative of a Voyage to the Ethiopic and South Atlantic Ocean, Indian Ocean, Chinese Sea, North and South Pacific Ocean in the years* 1829, 1830, 1831, by Abby Jane Morrell, who accompanied her husband, Captain Benjamin Morrell, Junior, of the schooner *Antarctic.*

Now to her story.

PART II

Opening the faded little volume, the reader sees a wood-engraving of the authoress, a remarkably handsome young woman of about twenty years of age, dressed in the quaint fashion of those days. As a matter of fact she was only four and twenty when her book was published. In a brief preface she tells us that her object in writing a book was not for the purpose of exciting interest in her own experiences of a remarkable voyage, but in the hope that it would arouse philanthropic en-

deavour to ameliorate the condition of American seamen. Throughout the volume there is a vein of deep, yet unobtrusive piety, and the reader is struck with her self-effacement, her courage, her reverent admiration for her young sailor husband, and her pride in his gallant ship and sturdy crew of native-born American seamen. In the *Antarctic* the young couple sailed many seas, and visited many lands, and everywhere they seem to have been the recipients of unbounded hospitality and attention, especially from their own country people, and English merchants, and naval and military men. It is very evident—even if only judging from her picture—that she was a very charming young lady of the utmost vivacity; and in addition to this, she was an accomplished linguist, and otherwise highly educated. Her beauty, indeed, caused her many tears, owing to the "wicked and persistent attentions" of the American consul at Manila. This gentleman appears to have set himself to work to make Mrs. Morrell a widow, until at last—her husband being away at sea—she had to be guarded from his persistent advances by some of the English and American families resident in Manila. She tells the story in the most naïve and delightful manner, and the reader's heart warms to the little woman. But I must not diverge from the subject.

"I am," she says, "the daughter of Captain John Wood, of New York, who died at New Orleans on the 14th of November, 1811. He was then master of the ship *Indian Hunter*. . . . He died when I was so young that if I pleased myself with thinking that I remember him, I could not have been a judge of his

virtues; but it has been a source of happiness to me that he is spoken of by his contemporaries as a man of good sense and great integrity."

When fifteen years of age Miss Wood met her cousin, Captain Morrell, a young man who had gained a reputation for seamanship, and as a navigator. They were mutually attracted to each other, and in a few months were married. Then he sailed away on a two years' voyage, returned, and again set out, this time to the little known South Seas. Absent a year—during which time a son was born to him—he was so pleased with the financial results of the voyage that he determined on a second; and his wife insisted on accompanying him, though he pleaded with her to remain, and told her of the dangers and terrors of a long voyage in unknown seas, the islands of which were peopled by ferocious and treacherous cannibals. But she was not to be deterred from sharing her husband's perils, and with an aching heart took farewell of her infant son, whom she left in care of her mother, and on 2nd September, 1829, the *Antarctic* sailed from New York. The cruise was to last two years, and the object of it was to seek for new sealing grounds in the Southern Ocean, and then go northward to the Pacific Islands and barter with the natives for sandal-wood, *bêche-de-mer*, pearls, and pearl-shell.

The crew of the brigantine were picked men, and all of them gave Morrell a written pledge to abstain from drinking spirits of any kind during the entire voyage. Morrell, though a strict disciplinarian, seems to have had their respect and even affection throughout, and

that he was a man of iron resolution and dauntless courage the book gives ample testimony.

After some months' sealing at the Auckland Islands, and visiting New Zealand, where the Morrells were entertained by the missionary, John Williams, the brigantine made a highly successful cruise among the islands of the South Pacific, and then Morrell went to Manila to dispose of his valuable cargo. This he did to great advantage, and once more his restless, daring spirit impelled him to make another voyage among the islands. This time, however, he left his wife in Manila, where she soon found many friends, who protected her from the annoying attentions of the consul, and nursed her through a severe illness.

"On the seventy-fifth day after the sailing of the *Antarctic*," she writes, "as I was looking with a glass from my window, as I had done for many days previously, I saw my husband's well-known signal at the mast head of an approaching vessel. . . . I was no sooner on board than I found myself in my husband's arms; but the scene was too much for my enfeebled frame, and I was for some time insensible. On coming to myself, I looked around and saw my brother, pale and emaciated. My forebodings were dreadful when I perceived that the number of the crew was sadly diminished from what it was when I was last on board. I dared not trust myself to make any inquiries, and all seemed desirous to avoid explanations. I could not rest in this state of mind, and ventured to ask what had become of the men. My husband, with his usual frankness, sat down and detailed to me the whole affair, which was as follows:—

"It seems that six weeks after leaving Manila" (here I omit some unimportant details) "he came to six islands that were surrounded by a coral reef." (The Sir Charles Hardy Group.) "Here was a-plenty of *bêche-de-mer*, and he made up his mind to get a cargo of this, and what shell he could procure. . . . On May 21st he sent a boat's crew on shore to clear away the brush and prepare a place to cure the *bêche-de-mer*. The natives now came off to the vessel, and seemed quiet, although it was evident that they had never seen a white man before, and the islands bore no trace of ever having been visited by civilised men. The people were a large, savage-looking race, but Mr. Morrell was lulled to security by their civil and harmless (*sic*) appearance, and their fondness of visiting the vessel to exchange their fruits for trinkets and other commodities attractive to the savages in these climes. They were shown in perfect friendship all parts of the vessel, and appeared pleased with the attentions paid them. . . . A boat was sent on shore with the forge and all the blacksmith's tools, but the savages soon stole the greater part of them.

"This was an unpropitious circumstance, but Mr. Morrell thought that he could easily recover them; and to accomplish this, he took six of his men, well armed, and marched directly to the village where the king lived. This was a lovely place, formed in a grove of trees. Here he met two hundred warriors, all painted for battle, armed with bows and arrows ready for an onset, waving their war plumes, and eager to engage. On turning round he saw nearly as many more in his rear

—it was a critical moment—the slightest fear was sure death. Mr. Morrell addressed his comrades, and, in a word, told them that if they did not act in concert, and in the most dauntless manner, death would be inevitable. He then threw down his musket, drew his cutlass, and holding a pistol in his right hand, he pushed for the king, knowing in what reverence savages in general hold the person of their monarch. In an instant the pistol was at the king's breast, and the cutlass waved over his head. The savages had arrowed their bows, and were ready at the slightest signal to have shot a cloud of missiles at the handful of white men; but in an instant, when they saw the danger of their king, they dropped their bows to the ground. At this fortunate moment, the captain marched around the circle, and compelled those who had come with war-clubs to throw those down also; all which he ordered his men to secure and collect into a heap. The king was then conducted with several of his chiefs on board the *Antarctic*, and kept until the next day. They were treated with every attention, but strictly guarded all night. On the following morning he gave them a good breakfast, loaded them with presents—for which they seemed grateful, and laboured hard to convince their conqueror that they were friendly to him and his crew—sent them on shore, together with some of his men, to go on with the works which had been commenced; but feeling that a double caution was necessary, he sent a reinforcement to his men on shore, well armed. . . . All were cautioned to be on their guard; but everything was unavailing; for not long after this, a general attack was made on

the men from the woods, in so sudden a manner that they were overthrown at once. Two of the crew who were in the small boat, made their escape out of reach of the arrows, and had the good fortune to pick up three others who had thrown themselves into the water for safety. On hearing the horrid yells of the savages, the whaleboat was sent with ten men, who, with great exertions, saved two more of the crew. The rest all fell, at one untimely moment, victims to savage barbarity! It was an awful and heart-sickening moment; fourteen of the crew had perished—they were murdered, mangled, and their corpses thrown upon the strand without the possibility of receiving the rites of Christian burial. . . . Four of the survivors were wounded—the heat was intolerable—the spirits of the crew were broken down, and a sickness came over their hearts that could not be controlled by the power of medicine—a sickness arising from moral causes, that would not yield to science nor art.

"In this situation Captain Morrell made the best of his way for Manila. . . . I grew pale over the narrative; it filled my dreams for many nights, and occupied my thoughts for many days, almost exclusively. . . . I dreaded the thought of the mention of the deed, and yet I wished I had been there. I might have done some good, or, if not, I might have assisted to dress the wounded, among whom was my own dear, heroic brother. He received an arrow in the breast, but his good constitution soon got over the shock; though he was pale even when I saw him, so many days after the event. My husband had now lost everything but his courage,

his honour, and his perseverance; but the better part of the community of Manila had become his friends, while the American consul was delighted with our misfortunes. He was alone!"

PART III

Nothing daunted by this catastrophe Captain Morrell petitioned the Captain-General of the Philippines for leave to take out a new crew of seventy additional men —sixty-six Manila men, and four Europeans. Everyone warned him of the danger of this—no other ship had ever dared take more than six Manila men as part of her complement, for they were treacherous, and prone to mutiny. But Morrell contested that he would be able to manage them and the captain-general yielded. Two English merchants, Messrs. Cannell and Gellis, generously lent him all the money he required to fit out, taking only his I.O.U. So:—

"On the 18th July, 1830, the *Antarctic* again sailed for Massacre Islands, as my husband had named the group where he lost his men. When I went on board I found a crew of eighty-five men, fifty-five of them savages as fierce as those whom we were about to encounter, and as dangerous, if not properly managed. One would have thought that I should have shrunk from this assemblage as from those of Massacre Islands, but I entered my cabin with a light step; I did not fear savage men half so much as I did a civilised brute. I was with my husband; he was not afraid, why should I be? This was my reasoning, and I found it safe.

"The schooner appeared as formidable as anything

possibly could of her size; she had great guns, ten in number, small arms, boarding-pikes, cutlasses, pistols, and a great quantity of ammunition. She was a war-horse in every sense of the word, but that of animal life, and that she seemed partially to have, or one would have thought so, to hear the sailors talk of her. . . . She coursed over the waters with every preparation for fight.

"On the 13th of September the *Antarctic* again reached Massacre Islands. I could only view the place as a Golgotha; and shuddered as we neared it; but I could see that most of the old crew who came hither at the time of the massacre were panting for revenge, although their captain had endeavoured to impress upon them the folly of gratifying such a passion if we could gain our purpose by mildness mixed with firmness." (I am afraid that here the skipper of the *Antarctic* was not exactly open with the little lady. He certainly meant that his crew should "get even" with their shipmates' murderers, but doubtless told her that he "had endeavoured," etc.)

"We had no sooner made our appearance in the harbour at Massacre Island, on the 14th, than we were attacked by about three hundred warriors. We opened a brisk fire upon them, and they immediately retreated. This was the first battle I ever saw where men in anger met men in earnest. We were now perfectly safe; our Manila men were as brave as Cæsar; they were anxious to be landed instantly, to fight these Indians at once. They felt as much superior, no doubt, to these ignorant savages as the philosopher does to the peasant. This the captain would not permit; he knew his superiority

while on board his vessel, and he also knew that this superiority must be, in a manner, lost to him as soon as he landed.

"The firing had ceased, and the enemy had retired, when a single canoe appeared coming from the shore with one man in it. We could not conjecture what this could mean. The man was as naked as a savage and as highly painted, but he managed his paddle with a different hand from the savages. When he came alongside, he cried out to us in English, and we recognised LEONARD SHAW, one of our old crew, whom we had supposed among the dead. The meeting had that joyousness about it that cannot be felt in ordinary life; he was dead and buried, and now was alive again! We received him as one might imagine; surprise, joy, wonder, took possession of us all, and we made him recount his adventures, which were wonderful enough.

"Shaw was wounded when the others were slain; he fled to the woods, and succeeded at that time in escaping from death. Hunger at length induced him to leave the woods and attempt to give himself to the savages, but coming in sight of the horrid spectacle of the bodies of his friends and companions roasting for a cannibal feast, he rushed forth again into the woods with the intent rather to starve than to trust to such wretches for protection. For four days and nights he remained in his hiding place, when he was forced to go in pursuit of something to keep himself from starving. After some exertion he obtained three coco-nuts, which were so young that they did not afford much sustenance, but were sufficient to keep him alive fifteen days, during

which time he suffered from the continually falling showers, which left him dripping wet. In the shade of his hiding place he had no chance to dry himself, and on the fifteenth day he ventured to stretch himself in the sun; but he did not long remain undisturbed; an Indian saw him, and gave the alarm, and he was at once surrounded by a host of savages. The poor, suffering wretch implored them to be merciful, but he implored in vain; one of them struck him on the back of the head with a war-club, and laid him senseless on the ground, and for a while left him as dead. When he recovered, and had gathered his scattered senses, he observed a chief who was not among those by whom he had been attacked, and made signs to him that he would be his slave if he would save him. The savage intimated to him to follow, which he did, and had his wound most cruelly dressed by the savage, who poured hot water into it, and filled it with sand.

"As soon as the next day, while yet in agony with his wound, he was called up and set to work in making knives, and other implements from the iron hoops, and other plunder from the forge when the massacre took place. This was indeed hard, for the poor fellow was no mechanic, though a first-rate Jack-tar . . . however, necessity made him a blacksmith, and he got along pretty well.

"The savages were not yet satisfied, and they made him march five or six miles to visit a distinguished chief. This was done in a state of nudity, without anything like sandals or mocassins to protect his feet from the flint stones and sharp shells, and under the burning

rays of an intolerable sun. Blood marked his footsteps. The king met him and compelled him to debase himself by the most abject ceremonies of slavery. He was now overcome, and with a dogged indifference was ready to die. He could not, he would not walk back; his feet were lacerated, swollen, and almost in a state of putrefaction. The savages saw this, and took him back by water, but only to experience new torments. The young ones imitated their elders, and these graceless little rascals pulled out his beard and whiskers, and eyebrows and eyelashes. In order to save himself some part of the pain of this wretched process of their amusement, he was permitted to perform a part of this work with his own hands. He was indeed a pitiable object, but one cannot die when one wishes, and be guiltless. This was not all he suffered; he was almost starved to death, for they gave him only the offal of the fish they caught, and this but sparingly; he sustained himself by catching rats, and these offensive creatures were his principal food for a long time. He understood that the natives did not suffer the rats to be killed, and therefore he had to do it secretly in the night time.

"Thus passed the days of the poor prisoner; the wound on his head was not yet healed, and notwithstanding all his efforts he failed to get the sand out of his first wound until a short time before his deliverance, when it was made known to him that he was to be immolated for a feast to the king of the group! All things had now become matters of indifference to him, and he heard the horrid story with great composure. All the preparations for the sacrifice were got up in his presence,

near the very spot where the accursed feast of skulls had been held. All was in readiness, and the people waited a long time for the king; but he did not come, and the ceremony was put off.

"Shaw has often expressed himself on this subject, and said that he could not but feel some regret that his woes were not to be finished, as there was no hope for him, and to linger always in this state of agitation was worse than death; but mortals are short-sighted, for he was destined to be saved through the instrumentality of his friends.

"His soul was again agitated by hope and fear in the extremes when the *Antarctic* made her appearance a second time on the coast. He feared that her arrival would be the signal for his destruction; but if this should not happen, might he not be saved? The whole population of the island he was on, and those of the others of the group, manned their war canoes for a formidable attack; and the fate of the prisoner was suspended for a season. The attack was commenced by the warriors in the canoes, without doubt confident of success; but the well-directed fire from the *Antarctic* soon repulsed them, and they sought the shore in paroxysms of rage, which was changed to fear when they found that the big guns of the schooner threw their shot directly into the village, and were rapidly demolishing their dwellings. It was in this state of fear and humility that Shaw was sent off to the vessel to stop the carnage and destruction; they were glad to have peace on any terms. They now gave up their boldness, and as it was the wish of all but the Manila men to spare the effusion of human

blood, it was done as soon as safety would permit of it.

"The story of Shaw's sufferings raised the indignation of every one of the Americans and English we had on board, and they were violently desirous to be led on to attack the whole of the Massacre Islands, and extirpate the race at once. They felt at this moment as if it would be an easy thing to kill the whole of the inhabitants; but Captain Morrell was not to be governed by any impulse of passion—he had other duties to perform; yet he did not reprimand the men for this feeling; thinking it might be of service to him hereafter.

"After taking every precaution to ensure safety, by getting up his boarding-nettings many feet above the deck, and everything prepared for defence or attack, the frame of the house, brought for the purpose, was got up on a small uninhabited island—which had previously been purchased of the king in exchange for useful articles such as axes, shaves, and other mechanical tools, precisely such as the Indians wished for. The captain landed with a large force, and began to fell the trees to make a castle for defence. Finding two large trees, nearly six feet through, he prepared the limbs about forty feet from the ground, and raised a platform extending from one to the other, with an arrow-proof bulwark around it. Upon this platform were stationed a garrison of twenty men, with four brass swivels. The platform was covered with a watertight roof, and the men slept there at night upon their arms, to keep the natives from approaching to injure the trees or the fort by fire—the only way they could assail the garrison. It looked

indeed like a castle—formidable in every respect; and the ascent to it was by a ladder, which was drawn up at night into this war-like habitation. The next step was to clear the woods from around the castle, in order to prevent a lurking enemy from coming within arrow-shot of the fort. Next, the house was raised, and made quite a fine appearance, being one hundred and fifty feet long, forty feet broad, and very high. The castle protected the house and the workmen in it, and both house and castle were so near the sea-board that the *Antarctic*, while riding at anchor, protected both. The castle was well stocked with provisions in case of a siege.

"The next day, after all was in order for business, a large number of canoes made their appearance near Massacre Island. Shaw said that this fleet belonged to another island (of the group) and he had never known them to stop there before. My husband, having some suspicions, did not suffer the crew to go on shore next morning at the usual time; and about eight o'clock one of the chiefs came off, as usual, to offer us fruits, but no boat was sent to meet him. He waited some time for us, and then directed his course to our island, which my husband had named Wallace Island, in memory of the officer who had bravely fallen in fight on the day of the massacre. This was surprising as not a single native had set foot on that island since our works were begun; but we were not kept long in suspense, for we saw about a hundred war-canoes start from the back side of Massacre Island, and make towards Wallace Island. We knew that war was their object, and the *Antarctic* was prepared for battle. The chief who had

come to sell us fruit, came in front of the castle—the first man. He gave the war-whoop, and about two hundred warriors, who had concealed themselves in the woods during the darkness of the night, rushed forward. The castle was attacked on both sides, and the Indians discharged their arrows at the building in the air, till they were stuck, like porcupines' quills, in every part of the roof. The garrison was firm, and waited in silence until the assailants were within a short distance, when they opened a tremendous fire with their swivels, loaded with canister shot; the men were ready with their muskets also, and the *Antarctic* opened her fire of large guns, all with a direct and deadly aim at the leaders of the savage band. The execution was very great, and in a short time the enemy beat a precipitate retreat, taking with them their wounded, and as many of their dead as they could. The ground was strewed with implements of war, which the savages had thrown away in their flight, or which had belonged to the slain. The enemy did not expect such a reception, and they were prodigiously frightened; the sound of the cannon alarmed every woman and child in the group, as it echoed through the forest, or died upon the wave; they had never heard such a roar before, for in our first fight there was no necessity for such energy. The Indians took to the water, leaving only a few in their canoes to get them off, while the garrison hoisted the American flag, and were greeted by cheers from those on board the schooner, who were in high spirits at their victory, which was achieved without the loss of a man on our part, and only two wounded. The music struck up 'Yankee Doodle,' 'Rule Britannia,'

etc., and the crew could hardly restrain their joy to think that they had beaten their enemy so easily.

"The boats were all manned, and most of the crew went on shore to mark the devastation which had been made. I saw all this without any sensation of fear, so easy is it for a woman to catch the spirit of those near her. If I had a few months before this time read of such a battle I should have trembled at the detail of the incidents; but seeing all the animation and courage which were displayed, and noticing at the same time how coolly all was done, every particle of fear left me, and I stood quite as collected as any heroine of former days. Still I could not but deplore the sacrifice of the poor, misguided, ignorant creatures, who wore the human form, and had souls to save. Must the ignorant always be taught civilisation through blood?—situated as we were, no other course could be taken.

"On the morning of the 19th, to our great surprise, the chief who had previously come out to bring us fruit, and had done so on the morning of our great battle, came again in his canoe, and called for Shaw, on the edge of the reef, with his usual air of kindness and friendship, offering fruit, and intimating a desire for trade, as though nothing had happened. The offer seemed fair, but all believed him to be treacherous. The small boat was sent to meet him, but Shaw, who we feared was now an object of vengeance, was not sent in her. She was armed for fear of the worst, and the coxswain had orders to kill the chief if he should discover any treachery in him. As our boat came alongside the canoe, the crew saw a bearded arrow

attached to a bow, ready for the purpose of revenge. Just as the savage was about to bend his bow, the coxswain levelled his piece, and shot the traitor through the body; his wound was mortal, but he did not expire immediately. At this instant a fleet of canoes made their appearance to protect their chief. The small boat lost one of her oars in the fight, and we were obliged to man two large boats and send them to the place of contest. The large boats were armed with swivels and muskets, and a furious engagement ensued. The natives were driven from the water, but succeeded in taking off their wounded chief, who expired as he reached the shore.

"After the death of Hennean, the name of the chief we had slain, the inhabitants of Massacre Island fled to some other place, and left all things as they were before our attack upon them, and our men roamed over it at will. The skulls of several of our slaughtered men were found at Hennean's door, trophies of his bloody prowess. These were now buried with the honours of war; the colours of the *Antarctic* were lowered half-mast, minute guns were fired, and dirges were played by our band, in honour of those who had fallen untimely on Massacre Island. This was all that feeling or affection could bestow. Those so inhumanly murdered had at last the rites of burial performed for them; millions have perished without such honours . . . it is the last sad office that can be paid.

"We now commenced collecting and curing *bêche-de-mer*, and should have succeeded to our wishes, if we had not been continually harassed by the natives as

soon as we began our efforts. We continued to work in this way until the 28th of October, when we found that the natives were still hostile, and on that day one of our men was attacked on Massacre Island, but escaped death through great presence of mind, and shot the man, who was the brother of the chief Hennean. Our man's name was Thomas Holmes, a cool, deliberate Englishman. Such an instance of self-possession, in such great danger as that in which he was placed, would have given immortality to a greater man. We felt ourselves much harassed and vexed by the persevering savages, and finding it impossible to make them understand our motives and intentions, we came to the conclusion to leave the place forthwith. This was painful, after such struggles and sacrifices and misfortunes; but there was no other course to pursue. Accordingly, on the 3rd of November, 1830, we set fire to our house and castle, and departed by the light of them, taking the *bêche-de-mer* we had collected and cured."

So ends Mrs. Morrell's story of the tragedy of "Massacre Island". She has much else to relate of the subsequent cruise of the *Antarctic* in the South Pacific and the East Indies, and finally the happy conclusion of an adventurous voyage, when the vessel returned safely to New York.

If the reader has been sufficiently interested in her story to desire to know where in the South Pacific her "Massacre Island" is situated, he will find it in any modern map or atlas, almost midway between New

Ireland and Bougainville Island, the largest of the Solomon group, and in lat. 4° 50′ S., long. 154° 20′ E. In conclusion, I may mention that further relics of the visit of the *Antarctic* came to light about fifteen years ago, when some of the natives brought three or four round shot to the local trader then living on Nisān. They had found them buried under some coral stone *débris*, when searching for robber crabs.

CHAPTER V

MUTINIES

MUTINIES, even at the present day, are common enough. The facts concerning many of them never come to light, it is so often to the advantage of the after-guard of a ship to hush matters up. I know of one instance in which the crew of a ship loading guano phosphates at Howland Island imprisoned the captain, three mates and the steward in the cabin for some days; then hauled them on deck, triced up the whole five and gave them a hundred lashes each, in revenge for the diabolical cruelties that had been inflicted upon them day by day for long months. Then they liberated their tormentors, took to the boats and dispersed themselves on board other guano ships loading at Howland Island, leaving their former captain and officers to shift for themselves. This was one of the mutinies that never came to light, or at least the mutineers escaped punishment.

I have witnessed three mutinies—in the last of which I took part, although I was not a member of the ship's crew.

My first experience occurred when I was a boy, and

has been alluded to by the late Lord Pembroke in his "Introduction" to the first book I had published—a collection of tales entitled *By Reef and Palm.* It was a poor sort of an affair, but filled my boyish heart with a glorious delight—in fact it was an enjoyable mutiny in some respects, for what might have been a tragedy was turned into a comedy.

With a brother two years older I was sent to San Francisco by our parents to begin life in a commercial house, and subsequently (of course) make our fortunes.

Our passages were taken at Newcastle (New South Wales) on the barque *Lizzie and Rosa,* commanded by a little red-headed Irishman, to whose care we were committed. His wife (who sailed with him) was a most lovable woman, generous to a fault. *He* was about the meanest specimen of an Irishman that ever was born, was a savage little bully, boasted of being a Fenian, and his insignificant appearance on his quarter deck, as he strutted up and down, irresistibly suggested a monkey on a stick, and my brother and myself took a quick dislike to him, as also did the other passengers, of whom there were thirty—cabin and steerage. His wife (who was the daughter of a distinguished Irish prelate) was actually afraid of the little man, who snarled and snapped at her as if she were a disobedient child. (Both of them are long since dead, so I can write freely of their characteristics.)

The barque had formerly been a French corvette—the *Felix Bernaboo.* She was old, ill-found and leaky, and from the day we left Newcastle the pumps were

kept going, and a week later the crew came aft and demanded that the ship should return to port.

The little man succeeded in quieting them for the time by giving them better food, and we continued on our course, meeting with such a series of adverse gales that it was forty-one days before we sighted the island of Rurutu in the South Pacific. By this time the crew and steerage passengers were in a very angry frame of mind; the former were overworked and exhausted, and the latter were furious at the miserly allowance of food doled out to them by the equally miserly captain.

At Rurutu the natives brought off two boat-loads of fresh provisions, but the captain bought only one small pig for the cabin passengers. The steerage passengers bought up everything else, and in a few minutes the crew came aft and asked the captain to buy them some decent food in place of the decayed pork and weevily biscuit upon which they had been existing. He refused, and ordered them for'ard, and then the mate, a hot-tempered Yorkshireman named Oliver, lost his temper, and told the captain that the men were starving. Angry words followed, and the mate knocked the little man down.

Picking himself up, he went below, and reappeared with a brace of old-fashioned Colt's revolvers, one of which—after declaring he would "die like an Irishman" —he pointed at the mate, and calling upon him to surrender and be put in irons, he fired towards his head. Fortunately the bullet missed. The sympathetic crew made a rush aft, seized the skipper, and after knocking him about rather severely, held him under the force

pump, and nearly drowned him. Only for the respect that the crew had for his wife, I really believe they would have killed him, for they were wrought up to a pitch of fury by his tyranny and meanness. The boatswain carried him below, locked him up in one of the state-rooms, and there he was kept in confinement till the barque reached Honolulu, twenty days later, the mate acting as skipper. At Honolulu, the mate and all the crew were tried for mutiny, but the court acquitted them all, mainly through the testimony of the passengers.

That was my first experience of a mutiny. My brother and I enjoyed it immensely, especially the attempted shooting of the good old mate, and the subsequent spectacle of the evil-tempered, vindictive little skipper being held under the force pump.

My third experience of a mutiny I take next (as it arose from a similar cause to the first). I was a passenger on a brig bound from Samoa to the Gilbert Islands (Equatorial Pacific). The master was a German, brutal and overbearing to a degree, and the two mates were no better. One was an American "tough," the other a lazy, foul-mouthed Swede. All three men were heavy drinkers, and we were hardly out of Apia before the Swede (second mate) broke a sailor's jaw with an iron belaying pin. The crew were nearly all natives —steady men, and fairly good seamen. Five of them were Gilbert Islanders, and three natives of Niué (Savage Island), and it was one of these latter whose jaw was broken. They were an entirely new crew and had shipped in ignorance of the character of the captain. I

had often heard of him as a brutal fellow, and the brig (the *Alfreda* of Hamburg) had long had an evil name. She was a labour-ship ("black-birder") and I had taken passage in her only because I was anxious to get to the Marshall Islands as quickly as possible.

There were but five Europeans on board—captain, two mates, bos'un and myself. The bos'un was, although hard on the crew, not brutal, and he never struck them.

We had not been out three days when the captain, in a fit of rage, knocked a Gilbert Islander down for dropping a wet paint-brush on the deck. Then he kicked him about the head until the poor fellow was insensible.

From that time out not a day passed but one or more of the crew were struck or kicked. The second mate's conduct filled me with fury and loathing, for, in addition to his cruelty, his language was nothing but a string of curses and blasphemy. Within a week I saw that the Gilbert Islanders were getting into a dangerous frame of mind.

These natives are noted all over the Pacific for their courage, and seeing that mischief was brewing, I spoke to the bos'un about it. He agreed with me, but said it was no use speaking to the skipper.

To me the captain and officers were civil enough, that is, in a gruff sort of way, so I decided to speak to the former. I must mention that I spoke the Gilbert and Savage Island dialects, and so heard the natives talk. However, I said nothing of that to the German. I merely said to him that he was running a great risk

in knocking the men about, and added that their countrymen might try to cut off the brig out of revenge. He snorted with contempt, and both he and the mates continued to "haze" the now sulky and brooding natives.

One calm Sunday night we were in sight of Funāfuti lagoon, and also of a schooner which I knew to be the *Hazeldine* of San Francisco. She, like us, was becalmed.

In the middle watch I went on deck and found the skipper and second mate drunk. The mate, who was below, was about half-drunk. All three men had been drinking heavily for some days, and the second mate was hardly able to keep his feet. The captain was asleep on the skylight, lying on his back, snoring like a pig, and I saw the butt of his revolver showing in the inner pocket of his coat.

Presently rain began to fall, and the second mate called one of the hands and told him to bring him his oil-skin coat. The man brought it, and then the brutal Swede, accusing him of having been slow, struck him a fearful blow in the face and knocked him off the poop. Then the brute followed him and began kicking him with drunken fury, then fell on the top of him and lay there.

I went for'ard and found all the natives on deck, very excited and armed with knives. Addressing them, I begged them to keep quiet and listen to me.

"The captain and mates are all drunk," I said, "and now is your chance to leave the ship. Funāfuti is only a league away. Get your clothes together as quickly

as possible, then lower away the port quarter-boat. I, too, am leaving this ship, and I want you to put me on board the *Hazeldine.* Then you can go on shore. Now, put up your knives and don't hurt those three men, beasts as they are."

As I was speaking, Max the bos'un came for'ard and listened. (I thought he was asleep.) He did not interfere, merely giving me an expressive look. Then he said to me:—

"Ask them to lock me up in the deck-house".

Very quietly this was done, and then, whilst I got together my personal belongings in the cabin, the boat was lowered. The Yankee mate was sound asleep in his bunk, but one of the Nuié men took the key of his door and locked it from the outside. Presently I heard a sound of breaking wood, and going on deck, found that the Gilbert Islanders had stove-in the starboard quarter-boat and the long-boat (the latter was on deck). Then I saw that the second mate was lashed (bound hand and foot) to the pump-rail, and the captain was lashed to one of the fife-rail stanchions. His face was streaming with blood, and I thought he was dead, but found that he had only been struck with a belaying pin, which had broken his nose.

"He drew a lot of blood from us," said one of the natives to me, "and so I have drawn some from him."

I hurried to the deck-house and told the bos'un what had occurred. He was a level-headed young man, and taking up a carpenter's broad axe, smashed the door of the deck-house. Then he looked at me and smiled.

"You see, I'm gaining my liberty—captain and officers tied up, and no one to look after the ship."

I understood perfectly, and shaking hands with him and wishing him a better ship, I went over the side into the boat, and left the brig floating quietly on the placid surface of the ocean.

The eight native sailors made no noise, although they were all wildly excited and jubilant, but as we shoved off, they called out "Good-bye, bos'un".

An hour afterwards I was on board the *Hazeldine*, and telling my story to her skipper, who was an old friend. Then I bade good-bye to the natives, who started off for Funāfuti with many expressions of good-will to their fellow-mutineer.

At daylight a breeze came away from the eastward, and at breakfast time the *Hazeldine* was out of sight of the *Alfreda*.

I learnt a few months later that the skipper had succeeded in bringing her into Funāfuti Lagoon, where he managed to obtain another crew.

CHAPTER VI

"MĀNI"

MĀNI was a half-caste—father a Martinique nigger, mother a Samoan—twenty-two years of age, and lived at Moatā, a little village two miles from Apia in Samoa.

Māni's husband was a Frenchman named François Renault, who, when he was sober, worked as a boat-builder and carpenter, for the German "factory" at Matafēle. And when he was away form home I would hear Māni laughing, and see her playing with her two dark-skinned little girls, and talking to them in a curious mixture of Samoan-French. They were merry mites with big rolling eyes, and unmistakably "kinky" hair—like their mother.

It was a fortnight after the great gale of 15th March, 1889, when the six German and American warships were wrecked, that Māni came to my house with a basket of fresh-water fish she had netted far up in a deep mountain pool. She looked very happy. "Frank," she said, had not beaten her for two whole weeks, and had promised not to beat her any more. And he was working very steadily now.

"That is good to hear, Māni."

She smiled as she nodded her frizzy head, tossed her *tiputa* (open blouse) over one shoulder, and sat down on the verandah steps to clean the fish.

"Yes, he will beat me no more—at least not whilst the shipwrecked sailors remain in Samoa. When they go I shall run away with the children—to some town in Savai'i where he cannot find me."

"It happened in this way," she went on confidentially: "a week ago two American sailors came to the house and asked for water, for they were thirsty and the sun was hot. I told them that the Moatā water was brackish, and I husked and gave them two young coco-nuts each. And then Frank, who had been drinking, ran out of the house and cursed and struck me. Then one of the sailors felled him to the earth, and the other dragged him up by his collar, and both kicked him so much that he wept.

"'Doth he often beat thee?' said one of the sailors to me. And I said 'Yes'.

"Then they beat him again, saying it was for my sake. And then one of them shook him and said: 'O thou dog, to so misuse thine own wife! Now listen. In three days' time we two of the *Trenton* will have a day's liberty, and we shall come here and see if thou hast again beaten thy wife. And if thou hast but so much as *mata pio'd* her we shall each kick thee one hundred times.'"

(*Mata pio*, I must explain, is Samoan for looking "cross-eyed" or unpleasantly at a person.)

"And Frank was very much afraid, and promised he

would no longer harm me, and held out his hand to them weepingly, but they would not take it, and swore at him. And then they each gave my babies a quarter of a dollar, and I, because my heart was glad, gave them each a ring of tortoiseshell."

"Did they come back, Māni?"

Māni, at heart, was a flirt. She raised her big black eyes with their long curling lashes to me, and then closed them for a moment demurely.

"Yes," she replied, "they came back. And when I told them that my husband was now kind to me, and was at work, they laughed, and left for him a long piece of strong tobacco tied round with tarred rope. And they said, 'Tell him we will come again by-and-by, and see how he behaveth to thee'."

"Māni," I said in English, as she finished the last of the fish, "why do you speak Samoan to me when you know English so well? Where did you learn it? Your husband always speaks French to you."

Māni told me her story. In her short life of two-and-twenty years she had had some strange experiences.

"My father was Jean Galoup. He was a negro of St. Pierre, in Martinique, and came to Samoa in a French barque, which was wrecked on Tutuila. He was one of the sailors. When the captain and the other sailors made ready to go away in the boats he refused to go, and being a strong, powerful man they dared not force him. So he remained on Tutuila and married my mother, and became a Samoan, and made much money

by selling food to the whaleships. Then, when I was twelve years old, my mother died, and my father took me to his own country—to Martinique. It took us two years to get there, for we went through many countries—to Sydney first, then to China, and to India, and then to Marseilles in France. But always in English ships. That is how I have learned to speak English.

"We lived for three years in Martinique, and then one day, as my father was clearing some land at the foot of Mont Pelée, he was bitten by a *fer-de-lance*, and died, and I was left alone.

"There was a young carpenter at St. Pierre, named François Renault, who had one day met me in the market-place, and after that often came to see my father and me. He said he loved me, and so when my father was dead, we went to the priest and we were married.

"My husband had heard much of Samoa from my father, and said to me: 'Let us go there and live'.

"So we came here, and then Frank fell into evil ways, for he was cross with me because he saw that the pure-blooded Samoan girls were prettier than me, and had long straight hair and lighter skins. And because he could not put me away be began to treat me cruelly. And I love him no more. But yet will I stay by him if he doeth right."

The fates were kind to Māni a few months later. Her husband went to sea and never returned, and Māni,

after waiting a year, was duly married by the consul to a respectable old trader on Savai'i, who wanted a wife with a "character"—the which is not always obtainable with a bride in the South Seas.

CHAPTER VII

AT NIGHT

THE day's work was finished. Outside a cluster of rudely built palm-thatched huts, just above the curving white beach, and under the lengthening shadows of the silent cocos, two white men (my partner and myself) and a party of brown-skinned Polynesians were seated together smoking, and waiting for their evening meal. Now and then one would speak, and another would answer in low, lazy tones. From an open shed under a great jack-fruit tree a little distance away there came the murmur of women's voices and, now and then, a laugh. They were the wives of the brown men, and were cooking supper for their husbands and the two white men. Half a cable length from the beach a schooner lay at anchor upon the still lagoon, whose waters gleamed red under the rays of the sinking sun. Covered with awnings fore and after she showed no sign of life, and rested as motionless as were the pendent branches of the lofty cocos on the shore.

Presently a figure appeared on deck and went for'ard, and then a bright light shone from the fore-stay.

My partner turned and called to the women, speaking

in Hawaiian, and bade two of them take their own and the ship-keeper's supper on board, and stay for the night. Then he spoke to the men in English.

"Who keeps watch to-night with the other man?"

"Me, sir," and a native rose to his feet.

"Then off you go with your wife and Terese, and don't set the ship on fire when you and your wife, and Harry and his begin squabbling as usual over your game of *tahia*."[1]

The man laughed; the women, pretending to be shocked, each placed one hand over her eyes, and with suppressed giggles went down to the beach with the man, carrying a basket of steaming food. Launching a light canoe they pushed off, and as the man paddled the women sang in the soft Hawaiian tongue.

"Happy beggars," said my comrade to me, as he stood up and stretched his lengthy, stalwart figure, "work all day, and sit up gambling and singing hymns —when they are not intriguing with each other's husbands and wives."

. . . . . .

The place was Providence Atoll in the North Pacific, a group of seventeen uninhabited islands lying midway between the Marshall and Caroline Archipelagoes—that is to say, that they had been uninhabited for some years, until we came there with our gang of natives to catch sharks and make coco-nut oil. There was no one to deny us, for the man who claimed the islands, Captain "Bully" Hayes, had given us the right of possession for

[1] "Tahia" is a gambling game played with small round stones; it resembles our "knuckle-bones".

two years, we to pay him a certain percentage of our profits on the oil we made, and the sharks' fins and tails we cured. The story of Providence Atoll (the "Arrecifos" of the early Spanish navigators, and the "Ujilang" of the native of Micronesia) cannot here be told—suffice it to say that less than fifty years before over a thousand people dwelt on the seventeen islands in some twelve or fourteen villages. Then came some dread disease which swept them away, and when Hayes sailed into the great lagoon in 1860—his was the first ship that ever entered it—he found less than a score of survivors. These he treated kindly; but for some reason soon removed them to Ponapé in the Carolines, and then years passed without the island being visited by any one except Hayes, who used it as a rendezvous, and brought other natives there to make oil for him. Then, in a year or so, these, too, he took away, for he was a restless man, and had many irons in the fire. Yet there was a fortune there, as its present German owners know, for the great chain of islands is covered with coco-nut trees which yield many thousands of pounds' worth of copra annually.

My partner and I had been working the islands for some months, and had done fairly well. Our native crew devoted themselves alternately to shark catching and oil making. The lagoon swarmed with sharks, the fins and tails of which when dried were worth from sixty to eighty pounds sterling per ton. (Nowadays the entire skins of sharks are bought by some of the traders on several of the Pacific Islands on behalf of a firm in Germany, who have a secret method of tanning and softening them, and rendering them fit for many pur-

poses for which leather is used—travelling bags, coverings for trunks, etc.)

The women helped to make the oil, caught fish, robber-crabs and turtle for the whole party, and we were a happy family indeed. We usually lived on shore, some distance from the spot where we dried the shark-fins, for the odour was appalling, especially after rain, and during a calm night. We dried them by hanging them on long lines of coir cinnet between the coco-palms of a little island half a mile from our camp.

But we did not always work. There were many wild pigs—the progeny of domestic stock left by Captain Hayes—on the larger islands, and we would have great "drives" every few weeks, the skipper and I with our rifles, and our crew of fifteen, with their wives and children, armed with spears. 'Twas great fun, and we revelled in it like children. Sometimes we would bring the ship's dog with us. He was a mongrel Newfoundland, and very game, but was nearly shot several times by getting in the way, for although all the islands are very low, the undergrowth in parts is very dense. If we failed to secure a pig we were certain of getting some dozens of large robber-crabs, the most delicious of all crustaceans when either baked or boiled. Then, too, we had the luxury of a vegetable garden, in which we grew melons, pumpkins, cucumbers, onions, tomatoes, etc. The seed (which was Californian) had been given to me by an American skipper, and great was our delight to have fresh European vegetables, for the islands produced nothing in that way, except cocoanuts and some jack-fruit. The lagoon teemed with an

immense variety of fish, none of which were poisonous, and both green and hawk-bill turtle were captured almost daily.

How those natives of ours could eat! One morning some of the children brought five hundred turtle eggs into camp; they were all eaten at three meals.

. . . . . .

That calm, quiet night the heat was somewhat oppressive, but about ten o'clock a faint air from the eastward began to gently rustle the tops of the loftiest palms on the inner beaches, though we felt it not, owing to the dense undergrowth at the back of the camp. Then, too, the mosquitoes were troublesome, and a nanny-goat, who had lost her kid (in the oven) kept up such an incessant blaring that we could stand it no longer, and decided to walk across the island—less than a mile—to the weather side, where we should not only get the breeze, but be free of the curse of mosquitoes.

"Over to the windward beach," we called out to our natives.

In an instant, men, women and children were on their feet. Torches of dried coco-nut leaves were deftly woven by the women, sleeping mats rolled up and given to the children to carry, baskets of cold baked fish and vegetables hurriedly taken down from where they hung under the eaves of the thatched huts, and away we trooped eastward along the narrow path, the red glare of the torches shining upon the smooth, copper-bronzed and half-nude figures of the native men and women. Singing as we went, half an hour's walk

brought us near to the sea. And with the hum of the surf came the cool breeze, as we reached the open, and saw before us the gently heaving ocean, sleeping under the light of the myriad stars.

We loved those quiet nights on the weather side of Arrecifos. Our natives had built some thatched-roofed, open-sided huts as a protection in case of rain, and under the shelter of one of these the skipper and I would, when it rained during the night, lie on our mats and smoke and yarn and watch the women and children with lighted torches catching crayfish on the reef, heedless of the rain which fell upon them. Then, when they had caught all they wanted, they would troop on shore again, come into the huts, change their soaking waist girdles of leaves for waist-cloths of gaily-coloured print or navy-blue calico, and set to work to cook the crayfish, always bringing us the best. Then came a general gossip and story-telling or singing in our hut for an hour or so, and then some one would yawn and the rest would laugh, bid us good-night, go off to their mats, and the skipper and I would be asleep ere we knew it.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CRANKS OF THE *JULIA* BRIG

WE were bound from Tahiti to the Gilbert Islands, seeking a cargo of native labourers for Stewart's great plantation at Tahiti, and had worked our way from island to island up northward through the group with fair success (having obtained ninety odd stalwart, brown-skinned savages), when between Apaian Island and Butaritari Island we spoke a lumbering, fat-sided old brig—the *Isabella* of Sydney.

The *Isabella* was owned by a firm of Chinese merchants in Sydney; and as her skipper (Evers) and her supercargo (Dick Warren) were old acquaintances of mine and also of the captain of my ship, we both lowered boats and exchanged visits.

Warren and I had not met for over two years, since he and I had been shipmates in a labour vessel sailing out of Samoa—he as mate and I as "recruiter"—so we had much to talk about.

"Oh, by-the-way," he remarked as we were saying good-bye, "of course you have heard of that shipload of unwashed saints who have been cruising around the South Seas in search of a Promised Land?"

"Yes, I believe that they have gone off to Tonga or

Fiji, trying to light upon 'the Home Beautiful,' and are very hard up. The people in Fiji will have nothing to do with that crowd—if they have gone there."

"They have not. They turned back for Honolulu, and are now at Butaritari and in an awful mess. Some of the saints came on board and wanted me to give them a passage to Sydney. You must go and have a look at them and their rotten old brig, the *Julia*. Oh, they are a lovely lot—full of piety and as dirty as Indian fakirs. Ah Sam, our agent at Butaritari, will tell you all about them. He has had such a sickener of the holy men that it will do you good to hear him talk. What the poor devils are going to do I don't know. I gave them a little provisions—all I could spare, but their appearance so disgusted me that I was not too civil to them. They cannot get away from Butaritari as the old brig is not seaworthy, and there is nothing in the way of food to be had in the island except coco-nuts and fish—manna is out of season in the South Seas just now. Good-bye, old man, and good luck."

On the following day we sighted Butaritari Island —one of the largest atolls in the North Pacific, and inhabited by a distinctly unamiable and cantankerous race of Malayo-Polynesians whose principal amusement in their lighter hours is to get drunk on sour toddy and lacerate each other's bodies with sharks' teeth swords. In addition to Ah Sam, the agent for the Chinese trading firm, there were two European traders who had married native women and eked out a lonely existence by buying copra (dried coco-nut)

and sharks' fins when they were sober enough to attend to business—which was infrequent. However, Butaritari was a good recruiting ground for ships engaged in the labour traffic, owing to the continuous internecine wars, for the vanquished parties, after their coco-nut trees had been cut down and their canoes destroyed had the choice of remaining and having their throats cut or going away in a labour ship to Tahiti, Samoa or the Sandwich Islands.

Entering the passage through the reef, we sailed slowly across the splendid lagoon, whose waters were as calm as those of a lake, and dropped anchor abreast of the principal village and quite near the ship of the saints. She was a woe-begone, battered-looking old brig of two hundred tons or so. She showed no colours in response to ours, and we could see no one on deck. Presently, however, we saw a man emerge from below, then a woman, and presently a second man, and in a few minutes she showed the Ecuadorian flag. Then all three sat on chairs under the ragged awning and stared listlessly at our ship.

Ah Sam came off from the shore and boarded us. He was a long, melancholy Chinaman, had thirty-five hairs of a beard, and, poor fellow, was dying of consumption. He told us the local news, and then I asked him about the cargo of saints, many more of whom were now visible on the after-deck of their disreputable old crate.

Ah Sam's thin lips parted in a ghastly smile, as he set down his whisky and soda, and lit a cigar. We were seated under the awning, which had just been spread, and so had a good view of the *Julia*.

The brig, he said, had managed to crawl into the lagoon three months previously, and in working up to an anchorage struck on one of the coral mushrooms with which the atoll is studded. Ah Sam and the two white traders went off with their boats' crews of natives to render assistance, and after some hours' hard work succeeded in getting her off and towing her up to the spot where she was then anchored. Then the saints gathered on the after-deck and held a thanksgiving meeting, at the conclusion of which, the thirsty and impatient traders asked the captain to give them and their boats' crews a few bottles of liquor in return for their services in pulling his brig off the rocks, and when he reproachfully told them that the *Julia* was a temperance ship and that drink was a curse and that God would reward them for their kindness, they used most awful language and went off, cursing the captain and the saints for a lot of mean blackguards and consigning them to everlasting torments.

On the following day all the Hawaiian crew bolted on shore and took up their quarters with the natives. The captain came on shore and tried to get other natives in their place, but failed—for he had no money to pay wages, but offered instead the privilege of becoming members of what Ah Sam called some "dam fool society".

There were, said Ah Sam, in addition to the captain and his wife, originally twenty-five passengers, but half of them had left the ship at various ports.

"And now," he concluded, pointing a long yellow forefinger at the rest of the saints, "the rest of them

will be coming to see you presently—the tam teives—to see wha' they can cadge from you."

"You don't like them, Ah Sam?" observed our skipper, with a twinkle in his eye.

Ah Sam's reply could not be put upon paper. For a Chinaman he could swear in English most fluently. Then he bade us good-bye for the present, said he would do all he could to help me get some "recruits," and invited us to dinner with him in the evening. He was a good-natured, hospitable fellow, and we accepted the invitation with pleasure.

A few minutes after he had gone on shore the brigantine's boat came alongside, and her captain and three of his passengers stepped on board. He introduced himself as Captain Lynch Richards, and his friends as Brothers So-and-So of the "Islands Brothers' Association of Christians". They were a dull, melancholy looking lot, Richards alone showing some mental and physical activity. Declining spirituous refreshments, they all had tea and something to eat. Then they asked me if I would let them have some provisions, and accept trade goods in payment.

As they had no money—except about one hundred dollars between them—I let them have what provisions we could spare, and then accepted their invitation to visit the *Julia*.

I went with them in their own boat—two of the saints pulling—and as they flopped the blades of their oars into the water and I studied their appearance, I could not but agree with Dick Warren's description—"as dirty as Indian fakirs," for not only were their

garments dirty, but their faces looked as if they had not come into contact with soap and water for a twelvemonth. Richards, the skipper, was a comparatively young man, and seemed to have given some little attention to his attire, for he was wearing a decent suit of navy blue with a clean collar and tie.

Getting alongside we clambered on deck—there was no side ladder—and I was taken into the cabin where Richards introduced me to his wife. She was a pretty, fragile-looking young woman of about five and twenty years of age, and looked so worn out and unhappy that my heart was filled with pity. During the brief conversation we held I asked her if she and her husband would come on board our vessel in the afternoon and have tea, and mentioned that we had piles and piles of books and magazines on the ship to which she could help herself.

Her eyes filled with tears. "I guess I should like to," she said as she looked at her husband.

Then I was introduced to the rest of the company in turn, as they sat all round the cabin, half a dozen of them on the transom lockers reminding me somehow of dejected and meditative storks. Glad of an excuse to get out of the stuffy and ill-ventilated cabin and the uninspiring society of the unwashed Brethren, I eagerly assented to the captain's suggestion to have a look round the ship before we "talked business," *i.e.*, concerning the trade goods I was to select in payment for the provisions with which I had supplied him. One of the Brethren, an elderly, goat-faced person, came with us, and we returned on deck.

Never before had I seen anything like the *Julia*. She was an old, soft-pine-built ex-Puget Sound lumberman, literally tumbling to decay, aloft and below. Her splintering decks, to preserve them somewhat from the torrid sun, were covered over with old native mats, and her spars, from want of attention, were splitting open in great gaping cracks, and were as black as those of a collier. How such a craft made the voyage from San Francisco to Honolulu, and from there far to the south of the Line and then back north to the Gilbert Group, was a marvel.

I was taken down the hold and showed what the "cranks" called their trade goods and asked to select what I thought was a fair thing in exchange for the provisions I had given them. Heavens! Such a collection of utter, utter rubbish! second-hand musical boxes in piles, gaudy lithographs, iron bedsteads, "brown paper" boots and shoes eaten half away by cockroaches. Sets of cheap and nasty toilet ware, two huge cases of common and much damaged wax dolls, barrels of rotted dried apples, and decayed pork, an ice-making plant, bales and bales of second-hand clothing—men's, women's and children's —cheap and poisonous sweets in jars, thousands of two-penny looking-glasses, penny whistles, accordions that wouldn't accord, as the cockroaches had eaten them up except the wood and metal work, school slates and pencils, and a box of Bibles and Moody and Sankey hymn-books. And the smell was something awful! I asked the captain what was the cause of it—it overpowered even the horrible odour of the decayed pork and rotted apples. He replied placidly that he thought

it came from a hundred kegs of salted salmon bellies which were stowed below everything else, and that he "guessed some of them hed busted".

"It is enough to breed a pestilence," I said; "why do you not all turn-to, get the stuff up and heave it overboard? You must excuse me, captain, but for Heaven's sake let us get on deck."

On returning to the poop we found that the skipper of our vessel had come on board, and was conversing with Mrs. Richards. I took him aside and told him of what I had seen, and suggested that we should make them a present of the provisions. He quite agreed with me, so turning to Captain Richards and the goat-faced old man and several other of the Brethren who had joined them, I said that the captain and I hoped that they would accept the provisions from us, as we felt sure that our owners would not mind. And I also added that we would send them a few bags of flour and some other things during the course of the day. And then the captain, knowing that Captain Richards and his wife were coming to have tea with us, took pity on the Brethren and said. he hoped they would all come to breakfast in the morning.

Poor beggars. Grateful! Of course they were, and although they were sheer lunatics—religious lunatics such as the United States produces by tens of thousands every year—we felt sincerely sorry for them when they told us their miserable story. The spokesman was an old fellow of sixty with long flowing hair—the brother-in-law of the man with the goat's face—and an enthusiast. But mad—mad as a hatter.

"The Islands Brothers' Association of Christians" had its genesis in Philadelphia. It was formed "by a few pious men to found a settlement in the South Seas, till the soil, build a temple, instruct the savages, and live in peace and happiness". Twenty-eight persons joined and seven thousand dollars were raised in one way and another—mostly from other lunatics. Many "sympathisers" gave goods, food, etc., to help the cause (hence the awful rubbish in the hold), and at 'Frisco they spent one thousand five hundred dollars in buying "trade goods to barter with the simple natives". At 'Frisco the *Julia*, then lying condemned, was bought for a thousand dollars—she was not worth three hundred dollars, and was put under the Ecuadorian flag. "God sent them friends in Captain Richards and his wife," ambled on the old man. Richards became a "Brother" and joined them to sail the ship and find an island "rich and fertile in God's gifts to man, and with a pleasant people dwelling thereon".

With a scratch crew of 'Frisco dead beats the brig reached Honolulu. The crew at once cleared out, and several of the "Brothers," with their wives, returned to America—they had had enough of it. After some weeks' delay Richards managed to get four Hawaiian sailors to ship, and the vessel sailed again for the Isle Beautiful. He didn't know exactly where to look for it, but he and the "Brothers" had been told that there were any amount of them lying around in the South Seas, and they would have some trouble in making a choice out of so many.

The story of their insane wanderings after the *Julia*

went south of the equator would have been diverting had it not been so distressing. The mate, who we gathered was both a good seaman and a competent navigator, was drowned through the capsizing of a boat on the reef of some island between the Gilbert Group and Rarotonga, and with his death what little discipline, and cohesiveness had formerly existed gradually vanished. Richards apparently knew how to handle his ship, but as a navigator he was nowhere. Incredible as it may seem, his general chart of the North and South Pacific was thirty years old, and was so torn, stained and greasy as to be all but undecipherable. As the weary weeks went by and they went from island to island, only to be turned away by the inhabitants, they at last began to realise the folly of the venture, and most of them wanted to return to San Francisco. But Richards clung to the belief that they only wanted patience to find a suitable island where the natives would be glad to receive them, and where they could settle down in peace. Failing that, he had the idea that there were numbers of fertile and uninhabited islands, one of which would suit the Brethren almost as well. But as time went on he too grew despondent, and turned the brig's head northward for Honolulu; and one day he blundered across Butaritari Island and entered the lagoon in the hope of at least getting some provisions. And again the crew bolted and left the Brethren to shift for themselves. Week after week, month after month went by, the provisions were all gone except weevily biscuit and rotten pork, and they passed their time in wandering about the

beaches of the lagoon and waiting for assistance. And yet there were two or three of them who still believed in the vision of the Isle Beautiful and were still hopeful that they might get there. "All we want is another crew," these said to us.

Our skipper shook his head, and then talked to them plainly, calling upon me to corroborate him.

"You will never get a crew. No sailor-man would ever come to sea in a crate like this. And you'll find no islands anywhere in the Pacific where you can settle down, unless you can pay for it. The natives will chivvy you off if you try to land. I know them—you don't. The people in America who encouraged you in this business were howling lunatics. Your ship is falling to pieces, and I warn you that if you once leave this lagoon in her, you will never see land again."

They were silent, and then the old man began to weep, and said they would there and then pray for guidance.

"All right," said the skipper, "go ahead, and I'll get my mate and the carpenter to come and tell you their opinion of the state of this brig."

The mate and carpenter made an examination, told Captain Richards in front of his passengers that the ship was utterly unseaworthy, and that he would be a criminal if he tried to put to sea again. That settled the business, especially after they had asked me to value their trade goods, and I told them frankly that they were literally not worth valuing, and to throw them overboard.

Ten days later the Brotherhood broke up—an Ameri-

can trading schooner came into the lagoon and her captain offered to take them to Jaluit in the Marshall Islands, where they were certain of getting a passage to Honolulu in some whaleship. They all accepted with the exception of Richards and his wife who refused to leave the *Julia*. The poor fellow had his pride and would not desert his ship. However, as his wife was ailing, he had a small house built on shore and managed to make a few hundred dollars by boat-building. But every day he would go off and have a look round the old brig to see if everything on board was all right. Then one night there came a series of heavy squalls which raised a lumpy sea in the lagoon, and when morning broke only her top-masts were visible—she had gone down at her anchors.

Richards and his fellow-cranks were the forerunners of other bands of ignorant enthusiasts who in later years endeavoured to foist themselves upon the natives of the Pacific Islands and met with similar and well-merited disaster. Like the ill-fated "La Nouvelle France" colony of the notorious Marquis de Ray, all these land-stealing ventures set about their exploits under the cloak of religion. One, under a pretended concession from the Mexican Government, founded a "Christian Redemption Colony" of scallywags, loafers and loose women at Magdalena Bay in Lower California, and succeeded in getting many thousands of pounds from foolish people. Then came a party of Mormon Evangelists who actually bought and paid for land in Samoa and conducted themselves decently and are probably living there now. After them came the

wretched *Percy Edward* band of pilgrims to found a "happy home" in the South Seas. They called themselves the "United Brotherhood of the South Sea Islands". In another volume, in an article describing my personal experiences of the disastrous "Nouvelle France" expedition to New Ireland,[1] I have alluded to the *Percy Edward* affair in these words, which I may be permitted to quote: "The *Percy Edward* was a wretched old tub of a brigantine (formerly a Tahiti-San Francisco mail packet). She was bought in the latter port by a number of people who intended to found a Socialistic Utopia, where they were to pluck the wild goat by the beard, pay no rent to the native owners of the soil, and, letting their hair grow down their backs, lead an idyllic life and loaf around generally. Such a mad scheme could have been conceived nowhere else but in San Francisco or Paris. . . . The result of the Marquis de Ray's expedition ought to have made the American enthusiasts reflect a little before they started. But having the idea that they could sail on through summer seas till they came to some land fair to look upon, and then annex it right away in the sacred name of Socialism (and thus violate one of the principles of true Socialism), they sailed—only to be quickly disillusionised. For there were no islands anywhere in the North and South Pacific to be had for the taking thereof; neither were there any tracts of land to be had from the natives, except for hard cash or its equivalent. The untutored Kanakas also, with whom they came in contact, refused to become brother

[1] *Ridan the Devil*: T. Fisher Unwin, London.

Socialists and go shares with the long-haired wanderers in their land or anything else. So from island unto island the *Percy Edward* cruised, looking more disreputable every day, until as the months went by she began to resemble in her tattered gear and dejected appearance her fatuous passengers. At last, after being considerably chivvied about by the white and native inhabitants of the various islands touched at, the forlorn expedition reach Fiji. Here fifty of the idealists elected to remain and work for their living under a Government. . . . But the remaining fifty-eight stuck to the *Percy Edward*, and her decayed salt junk and putrid water, and their beautiful ideals; till at last the ship was caught in a hurricane, badly battered about, lost her foremast, and only escaped foundering by reaching New Caledonia and settling her keel on the bottom of Nouméa harbour. Then the visionaries began to collect their senses, and denounced the *Percy Edward* and the principles of the 'United Brotherhood' as hollow frauds, and elected to abandon her and go on shore and get a good square meal. What became of them at Nouméa I did not hear, but do know that in their wanderings they received much charitable assistance from British shipmasters and missionaries—in some cases their passages were paid to the United States—the natural and proper country for the ignorant religious 'crank'."

CHAPTER IX

"DANDY," THE SHIP'S DINGO

WE anchored under Cape Bedford (North Queensland) one day, and the skipper and I went on shore to bathe in one of the native-made rocky water-holes near the Cape. We found a native police patrol camped there, and the officer asked us if we would like to have a dingo pup for a pet. His troopers had caught two of them the previous day. We said we should like to possess a dingo.

"Bring him here, Dandy," said the officer to one of his black troopers, and Dandy, with a grin on his sooty face, brought to us a lanky-legged pup about three months old. Its colour was a dirty yellowish red, but it gave promise of turning out a dog—of a kind. The captain put out his hand to stroke it, and as quick as lightning it closed its fang-like teeth upon his thumb. With a bull-like bellow of rage, the skipper was about to hurl the savage little beast over the cliffs into the sea, when I stayed his hand.

"He'll make a bully ship-dog," I urged, "just the right kind of pup to chivvy the niggers over the side when we get to the Louisiades and Solomons. Please

don't choke the little beggar, Ross. 'Twas only fear, not rage, that made him go for you."

We made a temporary muzzle from a bit of fishing line; bade the officer good-bye, and went off to the ship.

. . . . . .

We were nearly a month beating up to the Solomons, and in that time we gained some knowledge of Dandy's character. (We named him after the black trooper.) He was fawningly, sneakingly, offensively affectionate —when he was hungry, which was nearly always; as ferocious and as spiteful as a tiger cat when his stomach was full; then, with a snarling yelp, he would put his tail beneath his legs and trot for'ard, turning his head and showing his teeth. Crawling under the barrel of the windlass he would lie there and go to sleep, only opening his eyes now and then to roll them about vindictively when any one passed by. Then when he was hungry again, he would crawl out and slouch aft with a "please-do-be-kind-to-a-poor-dog" expression on his treacherous face. Twice when we were sailing close to the land he jumped overboard, and made for the shore, though he couldn't swim very well and only went round and round in circles. On each occasion a native sailor jumped over after him and brought him back, and each time he bit his rescuer.

"Never mind him, sir," said the mate to Ross one day, when the angry skipper fired three shots at Dandy for killing the ship's cat—missed him and nearly killed the steward, who had put his head out of the galley door to see the fun—"there's money in that dog. I

wouldn't mind bettin' half-a-sov that Charley Nyberg, the trader on Santa Anna, will give five pounds for him. He'll go for every nigger he's sooled on to. You mark my words."

In the fore-hold we had a hundred tons of coal destined for one of H.M. cruisers then surveying in the Solomon Group. We put Dandy down there to catch rats, and gave him nothing but water. Here he showed his blood. We could hear the scraping about of coal, and the screams of the captured rodents, as Dandy tore round the hold after them. In three days there were no more rats left, and Dandy began to utter his weird, blood-curdling howls—he wanted to come on deck. We lashed him down under the force pump, and gave him a thorough wash-down. He shook himself, showed his teeth at us and tore off to the galley in search of food. The cook gave him a large tinful of rancid fat, which was at once devoured, then he fled to his retreat under the windlass, and began to growl and moan. By-and-by we made Santa Anna.

. . . . . .

Charley Nyberg, after he had tried the dog by setting him on to two Solomon Island "bucks" who were loafing around his house, and seen how the beast could bite, said he would give us thirteen dollars and a fat hog for him. We agreed, and Dandy was taken on shore and chained up outside the cook-house to keep away thieving natives.

About nine o'clock that evening, as the skipper and I were sitting on deck, we heard a fearful yell from Charley's house—a few hundred yards away from where

we were anchored. The yell was followed by a wild clamour from many hundreds of native throats, and we saw several scores of people rushing towards the trader's dwelling. Then came the sound of two shots in quick succession.

"Haul the boat alongside," roared our skipper, "there's mischief going on on shore."

In a minute we, with the boat's crew, had seized our arms, tumbled into the boat and were racing for the beach.

Jumping out, we tore to the house. It seemed pretty quiet. Charley was in his sitting-room, binding up his wife's hand, and smoking in an unconcerned sort of a way.

"What is wrong, Charley?" we asked.

"That infernal mongrel of yours nearly bit my wife's hand off. Did it when she tried to stroke him. I soon settled him. If you go to the back you will see some native women preparing the brute for the oven. The niggers here like baked dog. Guess you fellows will have to give me back that thirteen dollars. But you can keep the hog."

So Dandy came to a just and fitting end.

CHAPTER X

KALA-HOI, THE NET-MAKER

OLD Kala-hoi, the net-maker, had ceased work for the day, and was seated on a mat outside his little house, smoking his pipe, looking dreamily out upon the blue waters of Leone Bay, on Tutuila Island, and enjoying the cool evening breeze that blew upon his bare limbs and played with the two scanty tufts of snow-white hair that grew just above his ears.

As he sat and smoked in quiet content, Marsh (the mate of our vessel) and I discerned him from the beach, as we stepped out of the boat. We were both tired—Marsh with weighing and stowing bags of copra in the steaming hold, and I with paying the natives for it in trade goods—a task that had taken me from dawn till supper time. Then, as the smell of the copra and the heat of the cabin were not conducive to the enjoyment of supper, we first had a bathe alongside the ship, got into clean pyjamas and came on shore to have a chat with old Kala-hoi.

"Got anything to eat, Kala-hoi?" we asked, as we sat down on the mat, in front of the ancient, who smilingly bade us welcome.

"My oven is made; and in it are a fat mullet, four breadfruit, some *taro* and plenty of *ifi* (chestnuts). For to-day is Saturday, and I have cooked for to-morrow as well as for to-night." Then lapsing into his native Hawaiian (which both my companion and I understood), he added, "And most heartily are ye welcome. In a little while the oven will be ready for uncovering and we shall eat."

"But how will you do for food to-morrow, Kala-hoi?" inquired Marsh, with a smile and speaking in English.

"To-morrow is not yet. When it comes I shall have more food. I have but to ask of others and it is given willingly. And even if it were not so, I would but have to pluck some more breadfruit or dig some taro and kill a fowl—and cook again to night." And then with true native courtesy he changed the subject and asked us if we had enjoyed our swim. Not much, we replied, the sea-water was too warm from the heat of the sun.

He nodded. "Aye, the day has been hot and windless until now, when the cool land breeze comes down between the valleys from the mountains. But why did ye not bathe in the stream in the fresh water, as I have just done. It is a good thing to do, for it makes hunger as well as cleanses the skin, and that the salt water will not do."

Marsh and I lit our pipes. The old man rose, went into his house and returned with a large mat and two bamboo pillows, telling us it would be more comfortable to lie down and rest our backs, for he knew that we had "toiled much during the day". Then he resumed his own mat again, and crossed his hands on his tatooed

knees, for although not a Samoan he was tatooed in the Samoan fashion. Beside him was a Samoan Bible, for he was a deeply religious old fellow, and could both read and write.

"How comes it, Kala, that thou livest all alone half a league from the village?" asked Marsh.

Kala-hoi showed his still white and perfect teeth in a smile.

"Ah, why? Because, O friend, this is mine own land. I am, as thou knowest, of Maui, in Hawaii, and though for thirty and nine years have I lived in Samoa, yet now that my wife and two sons are dead, I would be by myself. This land, which measures two hundred fathoms on three sides, and one hundred at the beach, was given to me by Mauga, King of Tutuila, because, ten years ago, when his son was shot in the thigh with a round bullet, I cut it out from where it had lodged against the bone."

"How old are you, Kala-hoi?"

"I know not. But I am old, very old. Yet I am young—still young. I was a grown man when Wilkes, the American Commodore, came to Samoa. And I went on board the *Vincennes* when she came to Apia, and because I spoke English well, *le alii Saua* ('the cruel captain'), as we called him,[1] made much of me, and treated me with some honour. Ah, he was a stern man, and his eye was as the eye of an eagle."

Marsh nodded acquiescence. "Aye, he was a strong, stern man. More than a score of years after thou hadst

[1] Wilkes was called "the cruel captain" by the Samoans on account of his iron discipline.

seen him here in Samoa, he was like to have brought about a bloody war between my country and his. Yet he did but what was right and just—to my mind. And I am an Englishman."

Kala-hoi blew a stream of smoke through his nostrils.

"Aye, indeed, a stern man, and with a bitter tongue. But because of his cruelty to his men was he punished, for in Fiji the *kai tagata* (cannibals) killed his nephew. And yet he spoke always kindly to me, and gave me ten Mexican dollars because I did much interpretation for him with the chiefs of Samoa. . . . One day there came on board the ship two white men; they were *papalagi tāfea* (beachcombers) and were like Samoans, for they wore no clothes, and were tatooed from their waists to their knees as I am. They went to the fore-part of the ship and began talking to the sailors. They were very saucy men and proud of their appearance. The Commodore sent for them, and he looked at them with scorn—one was an Englishman, the other a Dane. This they told him.

"'O ye brute beasts,' he said, and he spat over the side of the ship in contempt. 'Were ye Americans I would trice ye both up and give ye each a hundred lashes, for so degrading thyselves. Out of my ship, ye filthy tatooed swine! Thou art a disgrace to thy race!' So terrified were they that they could not speak, and went away in shame."

"Thou hast seen many things in thy time, Kala-hoi."

"Nay, friend. Not such things as thou hast seen—such as the sun at midnight, of which thou hast told me,

and which had any man but thou said it, I would have cried 'Liar!'"

Marsh laughed—"Yet 'tis true, old Kala-hoi. I have seen the sun at midnight, many, many times."

"Aye. Thou sayest, and I believe. Now, let me uncover my oven so that we may eat. 'Tis a fine fat mullet."

. . . . . .

After we had eaten, the kindly old man brought us a bowl of water in which to lave our hands, and then a spotless white towel, for he had associated much with Europeans in his younger days and had adopted many of their customs. On Sundays he always wore to church coat, trousers, shirt, collar and necktie and boots (minus socks) and covered his bald pate with a wide hat of *fala* leaf. Moreover, he was a deacon.

Presently we heard voices, and a party of young people of both sexes appeared. They had been bathing in the stream and were now returning to the village. In most of them I recognised "customers" of mine during the day—they were carrying baskets and bundles containing the goods bought from the ship. They all sat down around us, began to make cigarettes of strong twist tobacco, roll it in strips of dried banana leaf, and gossip. Then Kala-hoi—although he was a deacon—asked the girls if they would make us a bowl of kava. They were only too pleased, and so Kala-hoi again rose, went to his house and brought out a root of kava, the kava-bowl and some gourds of water, and gave them to the giggling maidens who, securing a mat for themselves, withdrew a little distance and proceeded to make the

drink, the young men attending upon them to cut the kava into thin, flaky strips, and leaving us three to ourselves. Night had come, and the bay was very quiet. Here and there on the opposite side lights began to gleam through the lines of palms on the beach from isolated native houses, as the people ate their evening meal by the bright flame of a pile of coco-nut shells or a lamp of coco-nut oil.

Marsh wanted the old man to talk.

"How long since is it that thy wife and sons died, Kala-hoi?"

The old man placed his brown, shapely hand on the seaman's knee, and answered softly:—

"'Tis twenty years".

"They died together, did they not?"

"Nay—not together, but on the same day. Thou hast heard something of it?"

"Only something. And if it doth not hurt thee to speak of it, I should like to know how such a great misfortune came to thee."

The net-maker looked into the white man's face, and read sympathy in his eyes.

"Friend, this was the way of it. Because of my usefulness to him as an interpreter of English, Taula, chief of Samatau, gave me his niece, Moé, in marriage. She was a strong girl, and handsome, but had a sharp tongue. Yet she loved me, and I loved her.

"We were happy. We lived at the town of Tufu on the *itu papa*" (iron-bound coast) "of Savai'i. Moé bore me boy twins. They grew up strong, hardy and

courageous, though, like their mother, they were quick-tempered, and resented reproof, even from me, their father. And often they quarrelled and fought.

"When they were become sixteen years of age, they were tatooed in the Samoan fashion, and that cost me much in money and presents. But Tui, who was the elder by a little while, was jealous that his brother Gālu had been tatooed first. And yet the two loved each other—as I will show thee.

"One day my wife and the two boys went into the mountains to get wild bananas. They cut three heavy bunches and were returning home, when Gālu and Tui began to quarrel, on the steep mountain path. They came to blows, and their mother, in trying to separate them, lost her footing and fell far below on to a bed of lava. She died quickly.

"The two boys descended and held her dead body in their arms for a long while, and wept together over her face. Then they carried her down the mountain side into the village, and said to the people:—

"'We, Tui and Gālu, have killed our mother through our quarrelling. Tell our father Kala-hoi, that we fear to meet him, and now go to expiate our crime.'

"They ran away swiftly; they climbed the mountain side, and, with arms around each other, sprang over the cliff from which their mother had fallen. And when I, and many others with me, found them, they were both dead."

"Thou hast had a bitter sorrow, Kala-hoi."

"Aye, a bitter sorrow. But yet in my dreams I see

them all. And sometimes, even in my work, as I make my nets, I hear the boys' voices, quarrelling, and my wife saying, 'Be still, ye boys, lest I call thy father to chastise thee both'."

As the girls brought us the kava Marsh put his hand on the old, smooth, brown pate, and saw that the eyes of the net-maker were filled with tears.

CHAPTER XI

THE KANAKA LABOUR TRADE IN THE PACIFIC

THE *fiat* has gone forth from the Australian Commonwealth, and the Kanaka labour trade, as far as the Australian Colonies are concerned, has ceased to exist. For, during the month of November, 1906, the Queensland Government began to deport to their various islands in the Solomon and New Hebrides Groups, the last of the Melanesian native labourers employed on the Queensland sugar plantations.

. . . . . .

The Kanaka labour traffic, generally termed "blackbirding," began about 1863, when sugar and cotton planters found that natives of the South Sea Islands could be secured at a much less cost than Chinese or Indian coolies. The genesis of the traffic was a tragedy, and filled the world with horror.

Three armed Peruvian ships, manned by gangs of cut-throats, appeared in the South Pacific, and seized over four hundred unfortunate natives in the old Afri-

can slave-trading fashion, and carried them away to work the guano deposits on the Chincha Islands. Not a score of them returned to their island homes—the rest perished under the lash and brutality of their cruel taskmasters.

Towards 1870 the demand for South Sea Islanders became very great. They were wanted in the Sandwich Islands, in Tahiti and Samoa; for, naturally enough, with their ample food supply, the natives of these islands do not like plantation work, or if employed demand a high rate of pay. Then, too, the Queensland and Fijian sugar planters joined in the quest, and at one time there were over fifty vessels engaged in securing Kanakas from the Gilbert Islands, the Solomon and New Hebrides Groups, and the great islands near New Guinea.

At that time there was no Government supervision of the traffic. Any irresponsible person could fit out a ship, and bring a cargo of human beings into port—obtained by means fair or foul—and no questions were asked.

Very soon came the news of the infamous story of the brig *Carl*, and her fiendish owner, a Dr. Murray, who with half a dozen other scoundrels committed the most awful crimes—shooting down in cold blood scores of natives who refused to be coerced into "recruiting". Some of these ruffians went to the scaffold or to long terms of imprisonment; and from that time the British Government in a maundering way set to work to effect some sort of supervision of the British ships employed in the "blackbirding" trade.

A fleet of five small gunboats (sailing vessels) were built in Sydney, and were ordered to "overhaul and inspect" every "blackbirder," and ascertain if the "blackbirds" were really willing recruits, or had been deported against their will, and were "to be sold as slaves". And many atrocious deeds came to light, with the result, as far as Queensland was concerned, that every labour ship had to carry a Government agent, who was supposed to see that no abuses occurred. Some of these Government agents were conscientious men, and did their duty well; others were mere tools of the greedy planters, and lent themselves to all sorts of villainies to obtain "recruits" and get an *in camera* bonus of twenty pounds for every native they could entice on board.

Owing to my knowledge of Polynesian and Melanesian dialects, I was frequently employed as "recruiter" on many "blackbirders"—French vessels from Nouméa in New Caledonia, Hawaiian vessels from Honolulu, and German and English vessels sailing from Samoa and Fiji, and in no instance did I ever have any serious trouble with my "blackbirds" after they were once on board the ship of which I was "recruiter".

Let me now describe an ordinary cruise of a "blackbirder" vessel—an honest ship with an honest skipper and crew, and, above all, a straight "recruiter"—a man who takes his life in his hands when he steps out, unarmed, from his boat, and seeks for "recruits" from a crowd of the wildest savages imaginable.

Labour ships carry a double crew—one to work the ship, the other to man the boats, of which there are

usually four on ordinary-sized vessels. They are whale-boats, specially adapted for surf work. The boats' crews are invariably natives—Rotumah men, Samoans, or Savage Islanders. The ship's working crew also are in most cases natives, and the captain and officers are, of course, white men.

The 'tween decks are fitted to accommodate so many "blackbirds," and, at the present day, British labour ships are models of cleanliness, for the Government supervision is very rigid; but in former days the hold of a "blackbirder" often presented a horrid spectacle—the unfortunate "recruits" being packed so closely together, and at night time the odour from their steaming bodies was absolutely revolting as it ascended from the open hatch, over which stood two sentries on the alert; for sometimes the "blackbirds" would rise and attempt to murder the ship's company. In many cases they did so successfully—especially when the "blackbirds" came from the same island, or group of islands, and spoke the same language. When there were, say, a hundred or two hundred "recruits" from various islands, dissimilar in their language and customs, there was no fear of such an event, and the captain and officers and "recruiter" went to sleep with a feeling of security.

Let us now suppose that a "blackbirder" (obnoxious name to many recruiters) from Samoa, Fiji, or Queensland, has reached one of the New Hebrides, or Solomon Islands. Possibly she may anchor—if there is an anchorage; but most likely she will "lie off and on," and send away her boats to the various villages.

On one occasion I "worked" the entire length of one

side of the great island of San Cristoval, visiting nearly every village from Cape Recherché to Cape Surville. This took nearly three weeks, the ship following the boats along the coast. We would leave the ship at daylight, and pull in shore, landing wherever we saw a smoke signal, or a village. When I had engaged, say, half a dozen recruits, I would send them off on board, and continue on my way. At sunset I would return on board, the boats would be hoisted up, and the ship either anchor, or heave-to for the night. On this particular trip the boats were only twice fired at, but no one man of my crews was hit.

The boats are known as "landing" and "covering" boats. The former is in command of an officer and the recruiter, carries five hands (all armed) and also the boxes of "trade" goods to be exhibited to the natives as specimens of the rest of the goods on board, or perhaps some will be immediately handed over as an "advance" to any native willing to recruit as a labourer in Queensland or elsewhere for three years, at the magnificent wage of six pounds per annum, generally paid in rubbishing articles, worth about thirty shillings.

The "covering" boat is in charge of an officer, or reliable seaman. She follows the "landing" boat at a short distance, and her duty is to cover her retreat if the natives should attack the landing boat by at once opening fire, and giving those in that boat a chance of pushing off and getting out of danger, and also she sometimes receives on board the "recruits" as they are engaged by the recruiter—if the latter has not been knocked on the head or speared.

On nearing the beach, where the natives are waiting, the officer in the landing-boat swings her round with his steer oar, and the crew back her in, stern first, on to the beach. The recruiter then steps out, and the crew carry the trade chests on shore; then the boat pushes off a little, just enough to keep afloat, and obtrusive natives, who may mean treachery, are not allowed to come too near the oars, or take hold of the gunwale. Meanwhile the covering boat has drawn in close to the first boat, and the crew, with their hands on their rifles, keep a keen watch on the landing boat and the wretched recruiter.

The recruiter, if he is a wise man, will not display any arms openly. To do so makes the savage natives either sulky or afraid, and I never let them see mine, which I, however, always kept handy in a harmless-looking canvas bag, which also contained some tobacco, cut up in small pieces, to throw to the women and children —to put them in a good temper.

The recruiter opens his trade box, and then asks if there is any man or woman who desires to become rich in three years by working on a plantation in Fiji, Queensland, or Samoa.

If he can speak the language, and does not lose his nerve by being surrounded by hundreds of ferocious and armed savages, and knowing that at any instant he may be cut down from behind by a tomahawk, or speared, or clubbed, he will get along all right, and soon find men willing to recruit. Especially is this so if he is a man personally known to the natives, and has a good reputation for treating his "blackbirds" well on board the

ship. The ship and her captain, too, enter largely into the matter of a native making up his mind to "recruit," or refuse to do so.

Sometimes there may be among the crowd of natives several who have already been to Queensland, or elsewhere, and desire to return. These may be desirable recruits, or, on the other hand, may be the reverse, and have bad records. I usually tried to shunt these fellows from again recruiting, as they often made mischief on board, would plan to capture the ship, and such other diversions, but I always found them useful as touts in gaining me new recruits, by offering these scamps a suitable present for each man they brought me.

I always made it a practice never to recruit a married man, unless his wife—or an alleged wife—came with him, nor would I take them if they had young children —who would simply be made slaves of in their absence. It required the utmost tact and discretion to get at the truth in many cases, and very often on going on board after a day of toil and danger I would be sound asleep, when a young couple would swim off—lovers who had eloped—and beg me to take them away in the ship. This I would never do until I had seen the local chief, and was assured that no objection would be made to their leaving.

(When I was recruiting "black labour" for the French and German planters in Samoa and Tahiti, I was, of course, sailing in ships of those nationalities, and had no worrying Government agent to harass and hinder me by his interference, for only ships under British colours were compelled to carry "Government agents".)

But I must return to the recruiter standing on the beach, surrounded by a crowd of savages, exercising his patience and brains.

Perhaps at the end of an hour or so eight or ten men are recruited, and told to either get into one of the boats or go off to the ship in canoes. The business on shore is then finished, the harassed recruiter wipes his perspiring brow, says farewell to the people, closes his trade chest, and steps into his landing boat. The officer cries to the crew, "Give way, lads," and off goes the boat.

Then the covering boat comes into position astern of the landing boat, for one never knew the moment that some enraged native on shore might, for having been rejected as "undesirable," take a snipe-shot at one of the boats. Only two men pull in the covering boat—the rest of the crew sit on the thwarts, with their rifles ready, facing aft, until the boats are out of range.

That is what is the ordinary day's work among the Solomon, New Hebrides, and other island groups of the Western Pacific. But very often it was—and is now—very different. The recruiter may be at work, when he is struck down treacherously from behind, and hundreds of concealed savages rush out, bent on slaughter. Perhaps the eye of some ever-watchful man in the covering boat has seen crouching figures in the dense undergrowth of the shores of the bay, and at once fires his rifle, and the recruiter jumps for his boat, and then there is a cracking of Winchesters from the covering boat, and a responsive banging of overloaded muskets from the shore.

Only once was I badly hurt when "recruiting". I

had visited a rather big village, but could not secure a single recruit, and I had told the officer to put off, as it was no use our wasting our time. I then got into the boat and was stooping down to get a drink from the water-beaker, when a sudden fusillade of muskets and arrows was opened upon us from three sides, and I was struck on the right side of the neck by a round iron bullet, which travelled round just under the skin, and stopped under my left ear. Some of my crew were badly hit, one man having his wrist broken by an iron bullet, and another received a heavy lead bullet in the stomach, and three bamboo arrows in his chest, thigh and shoulder. He was more afraid of the arrows than the really dangerous wound in his stomach, for he thought they were poisoned, and that he would die of lockjaw—like the lamented Commodore Goodenough, who was shot to death with poisoned arrows at Nukapu in the Santa Cruz Group.

The skipper nicked out the bullet in my neck with his pen-knife, and beyond two very unsightly scars on each side of my neck, I have nothing of which to complain, and much to be thankful for; for had I been in ever so little a more erect position, the ball would have broken my neck—and some compositors in printing establishments earned a little less money.

CHAPTER XII

MY FRIENDS, THE ANTHROPOPHAGI

MR. RUDYARD KIPLING has spoken of what he terms "the Great American Pie Belt," which runs through certain parts of the United States, the people of which live largely on pumpkin pie; in the South Pacific there is what may be vulgarly termed the Great "Long Pork" Belt, running through many groups of islands, the savage inhabitants of which are notorious cannibals. This belt extends from the New Hebrides north-westerly to the Solomon Archipelago, thence more westerly to New Ireland and New Britain, the coasts of Dutch, German, and British New Guinea; and then, turning south, embraces a considerable portion of the coast line of Northern Australia. Forty years ago Fiji could have been included, but cannibalism in that group had long since ceased; as also in New Caledonia and the Loyalty Islands.

The British, French and German Governments are doing their best to stamp out the practice. Ships of war patrol the various groups, and wherever possible, head-hunting and man-eating excursions are suppressed; but some of the islands are of such a vast extent that only

the coastal tribes are affected. In the interior—practically unknown to any white man—there is a very numerous population of mountaineer tribes, who are all cannibals, and will remain so for perhaps another fifty years, unless, as was done in Fiji by Sir Arthur Gordon (now Lord Stanmore), a large armed force is sent to subdue these people, destroy their towns, and bring them to settle on the coast, where they may be subjected to missionary (and police) influence.

During my trading and "blackbirding" voyages, I made the acquaintance, and indeed in some cases the friendship, of many cannibals, and at one time, when I was doing shore duty, I lived for six months in a large cannibal village on the north coast of the great island of New Britain, or Tombara, as the natives call it. I had not the slightest fear of being converted into "Long Pig" (*puaka kumi*); for the chief, a hideous, but yet not bad-natured savage, named Bobāran, in consideration for certain gifts of muskets, powder, bullets, etc., and tobacco, became responsible for my safety with his own people during my stay, but would not, of course, guarantee to protect me from the people of other districts (even though he might not be at enmity with them) if I ventured into their territory.

This was the usual agreement made by white traders who established themselves on shore under the *ægis* of a native ruler. Very rarely was this confidence abused. Generally the white men, sailors or traders who have been (and are even now) killed and eaten, have been cut off by savages other than those among whom they lived—very often by mountaineers.

Bobāran and all his people were noted cannibals. He was continually at war with his neighbours on the opposite side of the bay, where there were three populous towns, and there was much fighting, and losses on both sides. During my stay there were over thirty people eaten at, or in the immediate vicinity of, my village. Some of these were taken alive, and then slaughtered on being brought in; others had been killed in battle. But about eighteen months before I came to live at this place, Bobāran had had a party of twenty of his people cut off by the enemy—and every one of these were eaten.

I parted from Bobāran on very friendly terms. I should have stayed longer, but was suffering from malarial fever.

After recruiting my health in New Zealand, I joined a labour vessel, sailing out of Samoa, and during the ten months I served on her as recruiter I had some exceedingly exciting adventures with cannibals among the islands off the coast of German New Guinea, and on the mainland.

On our way to the "blackbirding grounds" we sighted the lofty Rossel Island—the scene of one of the most awful cannibal tragedies ever known. It is one of the Louisiade Archipelago, and is at the extreme south end of British New Guinea. It presents a most enchanting appearance, owing to its verdured mountains (9,000 feet), countless cataracts, and beautiful bays fringed with cocopalms and other tropical trees, amidst which stand the thatched-roofed houses of the natives. I will tell the story of Rossel Island in as few words as possible:—

In 1852 a Peruvian barque, carrying 325 Chinese coolies for Tahiti, was wrecked on the island; the captain and crew took to the four boats, and left the Chinamen to shift for themselves. Hundreds of savage natives rushed the vessel, killed a few of the coolies, and drove the rest on shore, where for some days they were not molested, the natives being too busy in plundering the ship. But after this was completed they turned their attention to their captives, marshalled them together, made them enter canoes and carried them off to a small, but fertile island. Here they were told to occupy a deserted village, and do as they pleased, but not to attempt to leave the island. The poor Chinamen were overjoyed, little dreaming of what was to befal them. The island abounded with vegetables and fruit, and the shipwrecked men found no lack of food. But they discovered that they were prisoners— every canoe had been removed. This at first caused them no alarm, but when at the end of a week their jailers appeared and carried off ten of their number, they became restless. And then almost every day, two, three or more were taken away, and never returned. Then the poor wretches discovered that their comrades were being killed and eaten day by day!

To escape from the island was impossible, for it was four miles from the mainland, and they had no canoes, and the water was literally alive with sharks. Some of them, wild with terror, built a raft out of dead timber, and tried to put to sea. They were seen by the Rossel Islanders, pursued and captured, and slaughtered for the cannibal ovens, which were now never idle. Some poor

creatures, who could swim, tried to cross to another little island two miles away, but were devoured by sharks. Without arms to defend their lives, they saw themselves decimated week by week, for whenever the natives came to seize some of their number for their ovens they came in force.

Six or seven months passed, and then one day the French corvette *Phoque* (if I am not mistaken in the name) appeared off the island. She had been sent by the Governor of New Caledonia to ascertain if any of the Chinamen were still on the island, or if all had escaped. Two only survived. They were seen running along the beach to meet the boats from the corvette, and were taken on board half-demented—all the rest had gone into the stomach of the cannibals or the sharks.

At the present time the natives of Rossel Island are subjects of King Edward VII., and are included in the government of the Possession of British New Guinea; have, I believe, a resident missionary, and several traders, and are well behaved. They would cast up their eyes in pious horror if any visitor now suggested that they had once been addicted to "long pig".

. . . . . .

Ten days after passing Rossel Island, we were among the islands of Dampier and Vitiaz Straits, which separate the western end of New Britain from the east coast of New Guinea. It was an absolutely new ground for recruiting "blackbirds" and our voyage was in reality but an experiment. We (the officers and I) knew that the natives were a dangerous lot of savage cannibals, speaking many dialects, and had hitherto only been in

communication with an occasional whaleship, or a trading, pearling, or, in the "old" colonial days, a sandalwood-seeking vessel. But we had no fear of being cut off. We had a fine craft, with a high freeboard, so that if we were rushed by canoes, the boarders would find some trouble in clambering on deck; on the main deck we carried four six-pounders, which were always kept in good order and could be loaded with grape in a few minutes. Then our double crew were all well armed with Sharp's carbines and the latest pattern of Colt's revolvers; and, above all, the captain had confidence in his crew and officers, and they in him. I, the recruiter, had with me as interpreter a very smart native of Ysabel Island (Solomon Group) who, five years before, had been wrecked on Rook Island, in Vitiaz Straits, had lived among the cannibal natives for a year, and then been rescued by an Austrian man-of-war engaged on an exploration voyage. He said that he could make himself well understood by the natives—and this I found to be correct.

We anchored in a charming little bay on Rook Island (Baga), and at once some hundreds of natives came off and boarded us in the most fearless manner. They at once recognised my interpreter, and danced about him and yelled their delight at seeing him again. Every one of these savages was armed with half a dozen spears, a jade-headed club, or powerful bows and arrows, and a wooden shield. They were a much finer type of savage than the natives of New Britain, lighter in colour, and had not so many repulsive characteristics. Neither were they absolutely nude—each man

wearing a girdle of dracæna leaves, and although they were betel-nut chewers, and carried their baskets of areca nuts and leaves and powdered lime around their necks, they did not expectorate the disgusting scarlet juice all over our decks as the New Britain natives would have done.

We noticed that many of them had recently inflicted wounds, and learned from them that a few days previously they had had a great fight with the natives of Tupinier Island (twenty miles to the east) and had been badly beaten, losing sixteen men. But, they proudly added, they had been able to carry off eleven of the enemy's dead, and had only just finished eating them. The chief's brother, they said, had been badly wounded by a bullet in the thigh (the Tupinier natives had a few muskets) and was suffering great pain, as the "doctors" could not get it out.

Now here was a chance for me—something which would perhaps lead to our getting a number of these cannibals to recruit for Samoa. I considered myself a good amateur surgeon (I had had plenty of practice) and at once volunteered to go on shore, look at the injured gentleman and see what I could do. My friend Bobāran in New Britain I had cured of an eczemic disorder by a very simple remedy, and he had been a grateful patient. Here was another chance, and possibly another grateful patient; and this being a case of a gunshot wound, I was rather keen on attending to it, for the Polynesians and Melanesians will stand any amount of cutting about and never flinch (and there are no coroners in the South Seas to ask silly

questions if the patient dies from a mistake of the operator).

Morel (the captain), the interpreter and myself went on shore. The beach was crowded with women and children, as well as men—a sure sign that no treachery was intended—and nearly all of them tried to embrace my interpreter. The clamour these cannibals made was terrific, the children being especially vociferous. Several of them seized my hands, and literally dragged me along to the house of the wounded man; others possessed themselves of Morel and the interpreter, and in a few minutes the whole lot of us tumbled, or rather fell, into the house. Then, in an instant, there was silence—the excited women and children withdrew and left the captain, the interpreter, some male cannibals and myself with my patient, who was sitting up, placidly chewing betel-nut.

In ten minutes Morel and I got out the bullet, then dressed and bandaged the wound, and gave the man a powerful opiate. Leaving him with his friends, Morel and I went for a walk through the village. Everywhere the natives were very civil, offering us coco-nuts and food, and even the women and children did not show much fear at our presence.

Returning to the house, we found our wounded friend was awake, and sitting up on his mat. He smiled affably at us, and rubbed noses with me—a practice I have never before seen among the Melanesians of this part of the Pacific. Then he told us that his womenfolk were preparing us a meal which would soon be ready. I asked him gravely (through the interpreter)

not to serve us any human flesh. He replied quite calmly that there was none left—the last had been eaten five days before.

Presently the meal was carried in—baked pork, an immense fish of the mullet kind, yams, taro, and an enormous quantity of sugar-cane and pineapples. The women did not eat with us, but sat apart. Our friend, whose name was Dārro, had six wives, four of whom were present. He had also a number of female slaves, taken from an island in Vitiaz Straits. These were rather light-skinned, and some quite good-looking, and all wore girdles of dracæna leaves. Neither Dārro nor his people smoked, though they knew the use of pipe and tobacco, and at one time had been given both by a sandal-wooding ship. I promised to give them a present of a ten pound case of plug tobacco, and a gross of clay pipes—I was thinking of "recruits". I sent off to the brig for the present, and when it arrived, and I had given nearly one hundred and fifty cannibals a pipe and a plug of tobacco each, the interpreter and I got to work on Dārro on the subject of our mission.

Alas! He would not entertain the idea of any of his fighting men going to an unknown land for three years. We could have perhaps a score or so of women —widows or slaves. Would that suit us? No, I said. We did not want single women or widows. There must be a man to each woman.

Dārro was "very sorry" (so was I). But perhaps I and the captain would accept two of the youngest of his female slaves as a token of his regard for us?

Morel and I consulted, and then we asked Dārro if

he could not give us two slave couples—two men and two women who would be willing to marry, and also willing to go to a country and work, a country where they would be well treated, and paid for their labour. And at the end of three years they would be brought back to Dārro, if they so desired.

Dārro smiled and gave some orders, and two strapping young men and two pleasant-faced young women were brought for my inspection. All were smiling, and I felt that a bishop and a brass band or surpliced choristers ought to have been present.

These were the only "blackbirds" we secured on that voyage from Rook Island; but three and a half years later, when these two couples returned to Dārro, with a "vast" wealth of trade goods, estimated at "trade" prices at seventy-two pounds, Dārro never refused to let some of his young men "recruit" for Fiji or Samoa.

I never saw him again, but he sent messages to me by other "blackbirding" vessels, saying that he would like me to come and stay with him.

And, although he had told me that he had personally partaken of the flesh of over ninety men, I shall always remember him as a very gentlemanly man, courteous, hospitable and friendly, and who was horror-struck when my interpreter told him that in England cousins intermarried.

"That is a horrid, an unutterable thing. It is inconceivable to us. It is vile, wicked and shameless. How can you clever white men do such disgusting things?"

Dārro and his savage people knew the terrors of the abuse of the laws of consanguinity.

CHAPTER XIII

ON THE "JOYS" OF RECRUITING "BLACKBIRDS"

A FEW years ago I was written to by an English lady, living in the Midlands, asking me if I could assist her nephew—a young man of three and twenty years of age—towards obtaining a berth as Government agent or as "recruiter" on a Queensland vessel employed in the Kanaka labour trade.

"I am told that it is a very gentlemanly employment, that many of those engaged in it are, or have been, naval officers and have a recognised status in society. Also that the work is really nothing—merely the supervision of coloured men going to the Queensland plantations. The climate is, I am told, delightful, and would suit Walter, whose lungs, as you know, are weak. Is the salary large?" etc.

I had to write and disillusionise the lady, and as I wrote I recalled one of my experiences in the Kanaka labour trade.

Early in the seventies, I was in Nouméa, New Caledonia, looking for a berth as recruiter in the Kanaka labour trade; but there were many older and much more experienced men than myself engaged on the same quest, and my efforts were in vain.

One morning, however, I met a Captain Poore, who was the owner and master of a small vessel, just about to leave Nouméa on a trading voyage along the east coast of New Guinea, and among the islands between Astrolabe Bay and the West Cape of New Britain. He did not want a supercargo; but said that he would be very glad if I would join him, and if the voyage was a success he would pay me for such help as I might be able to render him. I accepted his offer, and in a few days we left Nouméa.

Poore and I were soon on very friendly terms. He was a man of vast experience in the South Seas, and, except that he was subject to occasional violent outbursts of temper when anything went wrong, was an easy man to get on with, and a pleasant comrade.

The mate was the only other European on board, besides the captain and myself, all the crew, including the boatswain, being either Polynesians or Melanesians. The whole ten of them were fairly good seamen and worked well.

A few days after leaving Nouméa, Poore took me into his confidence, and told me that, although he certainly intended to make a trading and recruiting voyage, he had another object in view, and that was to satisfy himself as to the location of some immense copper deposits that had been discovered on Rook Island—midway between New Britain and New Guinea—by some shipwrecked seamen.

Twenty-two days out from Nouméa, the *Samana*, as the schooner was named, anchored in a well-sheltered and densely-wooded little bay on the east side of Rook

Island. The place was uninhabited, though, far back, from the lofty mountains of the interior, we could see several columns of smoke arising, showing the position of mountaineer villages.

It was then ten o'clock in the morning, and Poore, feeling certain that in this part of the coast there were no native villages, determined to go ashore, and do a little prospecting. (I must mention that, owing to light weather and calms, we had been obliged to anchor where we had to avoid being drifted on shore by the fierce currents, which everywhere sweep and eddy around Rook Island, and that we were quite twenty miles from the place where the copper lode had been discovered.)

Taking with us two of the native seamen, Poore and I set off on shore shortly after ten o'clock, and landed on a rough, shingly beach. The extent of littoral on this part of the island was very small, a bold lofty chain of mountains coming down to within a mile of the sea, and running parallel with the coast as far as we could see. The vegetation was dense, and in some places came down to the water's edge, and although the country showed a tropical luxuriance of beauty about the sea-shore, the dark, gloomy, and silent mountain valleys which everywhere opened up from the coast, gave it a repellent appearance in general.

Leaving the natives (who were armed with rifles and tomahawks) in charge of the boat, and telling them to pull along the shore and stop when we stopped, Poore and I set out to walk.

My companion was armed with a Henry-Winchester

carbine, and I with a sixteen-bore breech-loading shot-gun and a tomahawk. I had brought the gun instead of a rifle, feeling sure that I could get some cockatoos or pigeons on our way back, for we had heard and seen many flying about as soon as we had anchored. At the last moment I put into my canvas game bag four round bullet cartridges, as Poore said there were many wild pigs on the island.

On rounding the eastern point of the bay we were delighted to come across a beautiful beach of hard white sand, fringed with coco-nut palms, and beyond was a considerable stretch of open park-like country. Just as Poore and I were setting off inland to examine the base of a spur about a mile distant, one of the men said he could see the mouth of a river farther on along the beach.

This changed our plans, and sending the boat on ahead, we kept to the beach, and soon reached the river —or rather creek. It was narrow but deep, the boat entered it easily and went up it for a mile, we walking along the bank, which was free of undergrowth, but covered with high, coarse, reed-like grass. Then the boat's progress was barred by a huge fallen tree, which spanned the stream. Here we spelled for half an hour, and had something to eat, and then again Poore and I set out, following the upward course of the creek. Finding it was leading us away from the spur we wished to examine, we stopped to decide what to do, and then heard the sound of two gun-shots in quick succession, coming from the direction of the place in which the boat was lying. We were at once filled with alarm,

knowing that the men must be in danger of some sort, and that neither of them could have fired at a wild pig, no matter how tempting a shot it offered, for we had told them not to do so.

"Perhaps they have fallen foul of an alligator," said Poore, "all the creeks on Rook Island are full of them. Come along, and let us see what is wrong."

Running through the open, timber country, and then through the long grass on the banks of the stream, we had reached about half-way to the boat when we heard a savage yell—or rather yells—for it seemed to come from a hundred throats, and in an instant we both felt sure that the boat had been attacked.

Madly forcing our way through the infernal reed-like grass, which every now and then caused us to trip and fall, we had just reached a bend of the creek, which gave us a clear sight of its course for about three hundred yards, when Poore tripped over a fallen tree branch; I fell on the top of him, and my face struck his upturned right foot with such violence that the blood poured from my nose in a torrent, and for half a minute I was stunned.

"Good God, look at that!" cried Poore, pointing down stream.

Crossing a shallow part of the creek were a party of sixty or seventy savages, all armed with spears and clubs. Four of them who were leading were carrying on poles from their shoulders the naked and headless bodies of our two unfortunate sailors, and the decapitated heads were in either hand of an enormously fat man, who from his many shell armlets and other adorn-

ments was evidently the leader. So close were they—less than fifty yards—that we easily recognised one of the bodies by its light yellow skin as that of Anteru (Andrew), a native of Rotumah, and one of the best men we had on the *Samana*.

Before I could stay his hand and point out the folly of it, Poore stood up and shot the fat savage through the stomach, and I saw the blood spurt from his side, as the heavy, flat-nosed bullet ploughed its way clean through the man, who, still clutching the two heads in his ensanguined hands, stood upright for a few seconds, and then fell with a splash into the stream.

Yells of rage and astonishment came from the savages, as Poore, now wild with fury, began to fire at them indiscriminately, until the magazine of his rifle was emptied; but he was so excited that only two or three of them were hit. Then his senses came back to him.

"Quick, into the creek, and over to the other side, or they'll cut us off."

We clambered down the bank into the water, and then, by some mischance, Poore, who was a bad swimmer, dropped his rifle, and began uttering the most fearful oaths, when I told him that it was no use my trying to dive for it, unless he could hold my shot gun, which I was carrying in my left hand. We had scarcely reached the opposite bank, when thin, slender spears began to whizz about us, and one, no thicker than a lead pencil, caught Poore in the cheek, obliquely, and its point came out quite a yard from where it had entered, and literally pinned him to the ground.

I have heard some very strong language in the South Seas, but I have never heard anything so awful as that of Poore when I drew out the spear, and we started to run for our lives down the opposite bank of the creek.

For some minutes we panted along through the long grass, hearing nothing; and then, as we came to an open spot and stopped to gain breath, we were assailed by a shower of spears from the other side of the creek, and Poore was again hit—a spear ripping open the flesh between the forefinger and thumb of his left hand. He seized my gun, and fired both barrels into the long grass on the other side, and wild yells showed that some of our pursuers were at least damaged by the heavy No. 1 shot intended for cockatoos.

Then all became silent, and we again started, taking all available cover, and hoping we were not pursued.

We were mistaken, for presently we caught sight of a score of our enemies a hundred yards ahead, running at top speed, evidently intending to cross lower down and cut us off, or else secure the boat. Poore took two quick shots at them, but they were too far off, and gave us a yell of derision. Putting my hand into the game bag to get out two cartridges, I was horrified to find it empty, every one had fallen out; my companion used more lurid language, and we pressed on. At last we reached the boat, and found her floating bottom up —the natives had been too quick for us.

To have attempted to right her would have meant our being speared by the savages, who, of course, were watching our every movement. There was nothing

else to do but to keep on, cross the mouth of the creek, and make for the ship.

Scarcely had we run fifty yards when we saw the grass on the other side move—the natives were keeping up the chase. Another ten minutes brought us to the mouth of the stream, and then to our great joy we saw that the tide had ebbed, and that right before us was a stretch of bare sand, extending out half a mile. As we emerged into the open we saw our pursuers standing on the opposite bank. Poore pointed his empty gun at them, and they at once vanished.

We stopped five minutes to gain breath, and then kept straight on across the sand, till we sighted the schooner. We were seen almost at once, and a boat was quickly manned and sent to us, and in a quarter of an hour we were on board again.

That was one of the joys of the "gentlemanly" employment of "recruiting" in the South Seas.

CHAPTER XIV

MAKING A FORTUNE IN THE SOUTH SEAS

A SHORT time ago I came across in a daily newspaper the narrative of a traveller in the South Seas full of illuminating remarks on the ease with which any one can now acquire a fortune in the Pacific Islands; it afforded me considerable reflection, mixed with a keen regret that I had squandered over a quarter of a century of my life in the most stupid manner, by ignoring the golden opportunities that must have been jostling me wherever I went. The articles were very cleverly penned, and really made very pretty reading—so pretty, in fact, that I was moved to briefly narrate my experience of the subject in the columns of the *Westminster Gazette*, with the result that many a weary, struggling trader in the Solomon Islands, the New Hebrides and other groups of islands in the South Pacific rose up and called me blessed when they read my article, for I sent five and twenty copies of the paper to as many traders. Others doubtless obtained the journal from the haughty brass-bound pursers (there are no "supercargoes" now) of the Sydney and Auckland steamers. For the steamers, with their

high-collared, clerkly pursers, have supplanted for good the trim schooners, with their brown-faced, pyjama-clad supercargoes, and the romance of the South Seas has gone. But it has not gone in the imagination of some people.

I must mention that my copies of the *Westminster Gazette* crossed no less than nine letters written to me by old friends and comrades from various islands in the Pacific, asking me to do what I had done—put the true condition of affairs in Polynesia before the public, and help to keep unsuitable and moneyless men from going out to the South Sea Islands to starve. For they had read the illuminating series of articles to which I refer, and felt very savage.

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In a cabin-trunk of mine I have some hundreds of letters, written to me during the past ten years by people from all parts of the world, who wanted to go to the South Seas and lead an idyllic life and make fortunes, and wished me to show them how to go about it. Many of these letters are amusing, some are pathetic; some, which were so obviously insane, I did not answer. The rest I did. I cannot reproduce them in print. I am keeping them to read to my friends in heaven. Even an old ex-South Sea trader may get there—if he can dodge the other place. *Quien sabe?*

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Twenty-one of these letters reached me in France during February, March and April of last year. They were written by men and women who had been reading the above-mentioned series of brilliant articles. (I re-

gret to state that fourteen only had a penny stamp thereon, and I had to pay four francs postal dues.) The articles were, as I have said, very charmingly written, especially the descriptive passages. But nearly every person that the "Special Commissioner" met in the South Seas seems to have been very energetically and wickedly employed in "pulling the 'Special Commissioner's' leg".

The late Lord Pembroke described two classes of people—"those who know and don't write, and those who write and don't know".

Let me cull a few only of the statements in one of the articles entitled "The Trader's Prospects". It is an article so nicely written that it is hard to shake off the glamour of it and get to facts. It says:—

"The salaries paid by a big Australian firm to its traders may run from £50 to £200 a year, with board (that is, the run of the store) and a house."

There are possibly fifty men in the Pacific Islands who are receiving £200 a year from trading firms. Five pounds per month, with a specified ration list, and 5 per cent. commission on his sales is the usual thing —and has been so for the past fifteen years. As for taking "the run of the store," he would be quickly asked to take another run. The trader who works for a firm has a struggle to exist.

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"In the Solomons and New Hebrides you can start trading on a capital of £100 or so, and make cent. per cent. on island produce."

A man would want at least £500 to £600 to start

even in the smallest way. Here are some of his requirements, which he must buy before leaving Sydney or Auckland to start as an independent trader in Melanesia or Polynesia: Trade goods, £400; provisions for twelve months, £100; boat with all gear, from £25 to £60; tools, firearms, etc., £15 to £30. Then there is passage money, £15 to £20; freight on his goods, say £40. If he lands anywhere in Polynesia — Samoa, Tonga, Cook's Islands, or elsewhere—he will have Customs duties to pay, house rent, and a trading licence. And everywhere he will find keen competition and measly profits, unless he lives like a Chinaman on rice and fish.

"In British New Guinea you can dig gold in handfuls out of the mangrove swamps" (O ye gods!) "and prospect for any other mineral you may choose."

Gold-mining in British New Guinea is carried out under the most trying conditions of toil and hardships. The fitting out of a prospecting-party of four costs quite £500 to £1,000. And only very experienced diggers tackle mining in the Possession. And his Honour the Administrator will not let improperly equipped parties into the Possession.

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"It is the simplest thing in the world" to become a pearl sheller. "You charter a schooner—or even a cutter—if you are a smart seaman and know the Pacific, use her for general trading . . . and every now and then go and look up some one of the innumerable reefs and low atolls. . . . Some are beds of treasure, full of pearl-shell, that sells at £100 to £200 the ton," etc.

All very pretty! Here is the "simplicity" of it—

taking it at so much *per month*: Charter of small schooner of one hundred tons, £200 to £300; wages of captain and crew, £40; cost of provisions and wear and tear of canvas, running gear, etc., £60 (diving suits and gear for two divers, and boat would have to be bought at a cost of some hundreds of pounds); wages per month of each diver from £50 to £75, with often a commission on the shell they raise. Then you can go a-sailing, and *cherchez* around for your treasure beds. If you dive in Dutch waters, the gunboats collar you and your ship; if you go into British waters you will find that the business is under strict inspection by Commonwealth officials who keep a properly sharp eye on your doings. If you wish to go into the French Paumotus you have first to visit Tahiti, and apply for and pay 2,500 francs for a half-yearly licence to dive. (Most likely you won't get it.) If you try without this licence to buy even a single pearl from the natives, you will get into trouble—as my ship did in the "seventies," when the gunboat *Vaudreuil* swooped down on us, sent a prize crew aboard, put some of us in irons, and towed us to Tahiti, where we lay in Papeite harbour for three months, until legal proceedings were finished and the ship was liberated.

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"About £150 would be the lowest sum with which such a work" (scooping up the treasure) "could be carried out. This would provide a small schooner or a cutter from Auckland for a few months with all necessary stores. She would require two men, competent to navigate, two A.B.'s, and a diver, in order

to be run safely and comfortably; and the wages of these would be an extra cost. A couple of experienced yachtsmen could, of course, manage the affair more cheaply."

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Some of these recent nine letters which I received contained some very interesting facts. One man, an old trader in Polynesia, wrote me as follows: "Some of these poor beggars actually land in Polynesian ports with a trunk or two of glass beads, penny looking-glasses, twopenny knives and other weird rubbish, and are aghast to see large stores stocked with thousands of pounds' worth of goods of all kinds, goods which are sold to the natives at a very low margin of profit, for competition is very keen. In the Society Islands the Chinese storekeepers undersell us whites—they live cheaper." And "in Levuka and Suva, in Fiji, in Rarotonga and other islands there are scores of broken-down white men. They cannot be called 'beach-combers,' for there is nothing on the beach for them to comb. They live on the charity of the traders and natives. If they were sailor-men they could perhaps get fifteen dollars a month on the schooners. Why they come here is a mystery. . . . Most of them seem to be clerks or school-teachers. One is a violin teacher. Another young fellow brought out a type-writing machine; he is now yardman at a Suva hotel. A third is a married man with two young children. He is a French polisher, wife a milliner. They came from Belfast, and landed with eleven pounds! Hotel expenses swallowed all that in three weeks. Money is

being collected to send them to Auckland," and so on. There is always so much mischief being done by globe-trotting tourists and ill-informed and irresponsible novelists who scurry through the Southern Seas on a liner, and then publish their hasty impressions. According to them, any one with a modicum of common sense can shake the South Sea Pagoda Tree and become bloatedly wealthy in a year or so.

Did the "Special Commissioner" know that these articles would lead to much misery and suffering? No, of course not. They were written in good faith, but without knowledge. For instance, the wild statement about looking up "some one of the innumerable reefs and low atolls . . . beds of treasure, full of pearl-shell that sells at £100 to £200 the ton," etc.—there is not one single reef or atoll either in the North or South Pacific that has not been carefully prospected for pearl-shell during the past thirty-five years.

Then as to gold-mining in British New Guinea, "where you can dig gold in handfuls out of the mangrove swamps".

Diggers who go to New Guinea have to go through the formality of first paying their passages to that country from Australia. Then, on arrival, they have to arrange the important matter of engaging native carriers to take their outfit to the Mambaré River goldfields—a tedious and expensive item. And only experienced men of sterling physique can stand the awful labour and hardships of gold-mining in the Possession. Deadly malarial fever adds to the diggers' hard lot in New Guinea, and the natives, when not savage and

treacherous, are as unreliable and as lazy as a Spanish priest.

In conclusion, I can assure my readers that there is no prospect for any man of limited means to make money in the South Seas as a trader. Any assertions to the contrary have no basis of fact in them. In cotton and coco-nut planting there are good openings for men of the right stamp; in the second industry, however, one has to wait six years before his trees are in full bearing.

CHAPTER XV

THE STORY OF TOKOLMÉ

EARLY one morning some native hunters came on board our vessel and asked me to come with them to the mountain forest of the island of Ponapé in quest of wild boar. Glad to escape from the ship, which lay in a small land-locked harbour on the south-eastern side of the island, I quickly put together my gear, stepped into one of the long red-painted canoes alongside, and pushed off with my companions—men whom I had known for some years and who always looked to me to join them in at least one of their hunting trips whenever our brig visited their district on a trading cruise. Half an hour's paddling across the still waters of the harbour brought us to a narrow creek, lined on each side with dense mangroves. Following its upward course for the third of a mile, we came to and landed at a point of high land, where the dull and monotonous mangroves gave place to giant cedar trees and lofty palms. Here were two or three small native huts, used by the hunters as a rendezvous. Early as it was, some of their women-folk had arrived from the village, and cooked and made ready a meal of baked fish and chickens. Then after the in-

evitable smoke and discussion as to the route to be taken, and telling the women to expect us back at nightfall, we shouldered our rifles and hunting spears, and started off in single file along a winding track that followed the turnings of the now clear and brawling little stream. At first we experienced considerable trouble in ridding ourselves of over a dozen mongrel curs; they had followed the men from the village (two miles distant) and the women had fastened all of them in, in one of the huts, but the brutes had torn a hole through the cane-work side of the hut and came after us in full cry. Kicking and pelting them with sticks had no effect—they merely yelped and snarled and darted off into the undergrowth, only to reappear somewhere ahead of us. Finally my companions became so exasperated that, forgetting they were newly-made converts to Christianity, they burst out into torrents of abuse, invoking all the old heathen gods to smite the dogs individually and collectively, and not let them spoil our sport. This proving of no effect, an exasperated and stalwart young native named Nā, who was the owner of one of the most ugly and persistent of the animals, asked me to lend him my Winchester, and, waiting for a favourable chance, shot the brute dead. In an instant the rest of the pack vanished without a sound, and we saw no more of them till we returned to the huts in the evening.

These natives (seven in all) were, with the exception of a man of fifty years of age, all young men, and fine types of the Micronesian. Although much slighter in build than the average Polynesian of the south-eastern islands of the Pacific, they were extremely muscular

and sinewy, and as active and fleet of foot as wild goats. Their skins, where not tanned a darker hue by the sun, were of a light reddish-brown, and the blue tatooing on their bodies showed out very clearly; most of them had a very Semitic and regular cast of features, and their straight black hair and fine white teeth imparted a very pleasing appearance. Unlike some of the natives of the Micronesian Archipelago on the islands farther to the westward they dislike the disgusting practice of chewing the betel-nut, and in general may be regarded as a very cleanly and highly intelligent race of people. Somewhat suspicious, if not sullen, with the European stranger on first acquaintance, they do not display that spirit of hospitality and courtesy that seems to be inherent with the Samoans, Tahitians and the Marquesans. From the time when their existence was first made known to the world by the discoveries of the early Spanish voyagers to the South Seas they have been addicted to warfare, and the inhabitants of Ponapé in particular had an evil reputation for the horrible cruelties the victors inflicted upon the vanquished in battle, even though the victims were frequently their own kith and kin. When, less than twenty years ago, Spain reasserted her claims to the Caroline Islands (of which Ponapé is the largest and most fertile) and placed garrisons on several of the islands, the natives of Ponapé made a savage and determined resistance, and in one instance wiped out two companies of troops and their officers. A few years ago, however, the entire archipelago passed into the hands of Germany—Spain accepting a monetary compensation for parting with territory

that never belonged to her—and at the present time these once valorous and warlike savages are learning the ways of civilisation and—as might be expected—rapidly diminishing in numbers.

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After ridding ourselves of the dogs we pressed steadily onward and upward, till we no longer heard the hum of the surf beating upon the barrier reef, and then when the sun was almost overhead we emerged from the deep, darkened aisles of the silent forest into a small cleared space on the summit of a spur and saw displayed before us one of the loveliest panoramas in the universe. For of all the many beautiful island gems which lie upon the blue bosom of the North Pacific, there is none that exceeds in beauty and fertility the Isle of Ascension, as Ponapé is sometimes called—that being the name used by the Spaniards.

Three thousand feet below we could see for many miles the trend of the coast north and south. Within the wavering line of roaring white surf, which marked the barrier reef, lay the quiet green waters of the narrow lagoon encompassing the whole of this part of Ponapé, studded with many small islands—some rocky and precipitous, some so low-lying and so thickly palm-clad that they seemed, with their girdles of shining beach, to be but floating gardens of verdure, so soft and ephemeral that even the gentle breath of the rising trade wind at early morn would cause them to vanish like some desert mirage.

To the southward was the small, land-locked harbour of Roān Kiti, whose gleaming waters were as yet un-

disturbed by the faintest ripple, and the two American whaleships and my own vessel which floated on its placid bosom, lay so still and quiet, that one could have thought them to be abandoned by their crews were it not that one of the whalers began to loose and dry sails, for it had rained heavily during the night. These two ships were from New Bedford, and they had put into the little harbour to wood and water, and give their sea-worn crews a fortnight's rest ere they sailed northward away from the bright isles of the Pacific to the cold, wintry seas of the Siberian coast and the Kurile Islands, where they would cruise for "bowhead" whales, before returning home to America.

Here, because the White Man both felt and looked tired after the long climb, and because the Brown Men wanted to make a drink of green kava, we decided to rest for an hour or two—some of the men suggesting that we should not return till the following day. Food we had brought with us, and everywhere on the tops of the mountains water was to be found in small rocky pools. So whilst one of the men cut up a rugged root of green kava and began to pound it with a smooth stone, the White Man, well content, laid down his gun, sat upon a boulder of stone and looked around him. I was pleased at the view of sea and verdant shore far below, and pleased too at the prospect of some good sport; for everywhere, on our way up to the mountains, we had seen the tracks of many a wild pig, and here, on the summit of this spur, could rest awhile, before descending into a deep valley on the eastern side of the island, where we knew we would find the wild

pigs feeding along the banks of a mountain stream which debouched into Roān Kiti harbour, four miles away.

"How is this place named, and how came it to be clear of the forest trees?" I asked one of my native friends, a handsome young man, about thirty years of age, whose naked, smooth, and red-brown skin, from neck to waist, showed by its tatooing that he was of chiefly lineage.

"Tokolmé it is called," he replied. "It was once a place of great strength; a fortress was made here in the mountains, in the olden time—in the old days, long before white men came to Ponapé. See, all around us, half-buried in the ground, are some of the blocks of stone which were carried up from the face of the mountain which overlooks Metalanien"—he pointed to several huge basaltic prisms lying near—"these stones were the lower course of the fort; the upper part was of wood, great forest trees, cut down and squared into lengths of two fathoms. And it is because of the cutting down of these trees, which were very old and took many hundred years to grow, that the place where we now sit, and all around us, is so clear. For the blood of many hundreds of men have sunk into it, and because it was the blood of innocent people, there be now nothing that will grow upon it."

The place was certainly quite bare of trees, though encompassed by the forest on all sides lower down. One reason for this may have been that in addition to the large basaltic prisms, the ground was thickly covered with a layer of smaller and broken stones to

which time and the action of the weather had given a comparatively smooth surface.

"Tell me of it, Rai," I said.

"Presently, friend, after we have had the drink of kava and eaten some food. Ah, this green kava of ours is good to drink, not like the weak, dried root that the women of Samoa chew and mix with much water in a wooden bowl. What goodness can there be in that? Here, we take the root fresh from the soil when it is full of juice, beat it to a pulp and add but little water."

"It is good, Rai," I admitted, "but give me only a little. It is too strong for me and a full bowl would cause me to stagger and fall."

He laughed good-naturedly as he handed me a half coco-nut shell containing a little of the thick greenish-yellow liquid. And then, after all had drunk in turn, the baskets of cold baked food were opened and we ate; and then as we lit our pipes and smoked Rai told us the story of Tokolmé.

"In those days, before the white men came here to this country, though they had been to islands not many days' sail from here by canoe, there were but two great chiefs of Ponapé—now there are seven—one was Lirou, who ruled all this part of the land, and who dwelt at Roān Kiti with two thousand people, and the other was Roka, king of all the northern coast and ruler of many villages. Roka was a great voyager and had sailed as far to the east as Kusaie, which is two hundred leagues from here, and his people were proud

of him and his great daring and of the slaves that he brought back with him from Kusaie.[1]

"Here in Tokolmé lived three hundred and two-score people, who owed allegiance neither to Lirou nor Roka, for their ancestors had come to Ponapé from Yap, an island far to the westward. After many years of fighting on the coast they made peace with Lirou's father, who gave them all this piece of country as a free gift, and without tribute, and many of their young men and women intermarried with ours, for the language and customs of Yap are akin to those of Ponapé.

"Soon after peace was made and Tolan, chief of the strangers, had built the village and made plantations, he died, and as he left no son, his daughter Leā became chieftainess, although she was but fourteen years of age.

"Lirou, who was a haughty, overbearing young man, sent presents, and asked her in marriage, and great was his anger when she refused, saying that she had no desire to leave her people now that her father was dead.

"'See,' he said to his father, 'see the insult put upon thee by these proud ones of Yap—these dog-eating strangers who drifted to our land as a log drifts upon the ocean. Thou hast given them fair lands with running water, and great forest trees, and this girl refuses to marry me. Am I as nothing that I should be so treated? Shall I, Lirou, be laughed at? Am I a boy or a grown man?'

[1] Strongs Island.

"The old chief, who desired peace, sought in vain to soothe him. 'Wait for another year,' he said, 'and it may be that she will be of a different mind. And already thou hast two wives—why seek another?'

"'Because it is my will,' replied Lirou fiercely, and he went away, nursing his wrath.

"One day a party of Roka's young men and women went in several canoes to the group of small islands near the mainland called Pākin to catch turtle; whilst the men were away out on the reef at night with their turtle nets a number of Lirou's men came to the huts where the women were and watched them cooking food to give to their husbands on their return. Rain was falling heavily, and Lirou's men came into the houses, unasked, and sat down and then began to jest with the women somewhat rudely. This made them somewhat afraid, for they were all married, and to jest with the wife of another man is looked upon as an evil thing. But their husbands being a league away the women could do nothing and went on with their cooking in silence. Presently, Lirou's men who had brought with them some gourds of the grog called *rarait*, which is made from sugar-cane, began to drink it and pressed the women to do so also. When they refused to do so, the men became still more rude and bade the women serve them with some of the food they had prepared. This was a great insult, but being in fear, they obeyed. Then, as the grog made them bolder, some of the men laid hands on the women and there was a great outcry and struggle, and a young woman named Sipi-nah fell or was thrown against a great burning log, and her face so badly burned

that she cried out in agony and ran outside, followed by all the other women. They ran along the beach in the pouring rain till they were abreast of the place where their husbands were fishing and called to them to return. When the fishermen saw what had befallen Sipi-nah they were filled with rage, for she was a blood-relation of Roka's, and hastening back to the houses they rushed in upon Lirou's people, slew three of them, put their heads in baskets and brought them to Roka.

"From this thing came a long war which was called 'the war of the face of Sipi-nah,' and a great battle was fought in canoes on the lagoon. Lirou's father with many hundreds of his people were slain, and the rest fled to Roān Kiti pursued by King Roka, who burnt the town. Then Lirou (who, now that his father was killed, was chief) sued for peace, and promised Roka a yearly tribute of three thousand plates of turtle shell, and five new canoes. So Roka, being satisfied, sailed away, and there was peace. Had he so desired it he could have utterly swept away all Lirou's people and burned their villages and destroyed every one of their plantations, but although he was a great fighting man he was not cruel. Yet he said to Sipi-nah, after peace was made: 'I pray thee, come near me no more; for although I have revenged myself upon those who have ill-used and insulted thee and me, my hand will again incline to the spear if I look upon thy scarred face again. And I want no more wars.'

"The son of Lirou (who now took his father's name) and his people began, with heavy hearts, to rebuild the town. After the council house was finished, Lirou told

them to cease work and called together his head men and spoke.

"'Why should we labour to build more houses here?' he said. 'See, this is my mind. Only for one year shall I pay this heavy tribute to Roka. Then shall I defy him.'

"The head men were silent.

"Lirou laughed. 'Have no fear. I am no boaster. But we cannot fight him here in Roān Kiti, which is open to the sea, and never can we make it a strong fort, for here we have no *falat*,[1] nor yet any great forest trees. But at Tokolmé are many thousands of the great stones and mighty trees in plenty. Ah, my father was a foolish man to give such a place to people who fought against us. Are we fools, to build here another weak town, and let Roka bear the more heavily upon us? Answer me!'

"'What wouldst thou have, O chief,' asked one of the head men.

"'I would have Tokolmé. It is mine inheritance. There can we make a strong fort, and from there shall we have entrance to the sea by the river. Are we to let these dogs from Yap deny us?'

"'Let us ask them to give us, as an act of friendship, all the trees, and all the *falat* we desire,' said one of the head men.

"Lirou laughed scornfully. 'And we to toil for years in carrying the trees and stones from Tokolmé, a league

[1] "Falat" is the natives' name for the huge prisms of basalt with which the mysterious and Cyclopean walls, canals, vaults, and forts are constructed on the island of Ponapé.

away. Bah! Let us fall upon them as they sleep—and spare no one.'

"'Nay, nay,' said a sub-chief, named Kol, who had taken one of the Yap girls to wife, 'that is an evil thought, and foul treachery. We be at peace with them. I, for one, will have no part in such wickedness.' And others said the same, but some were with Lirou.

"Then, after many angry words had been spoken—some for fair dealing, and some for murder—Lirou said to the chief Kol and two others: 'Go to the girl Leā and her head men with presents, and say this: We of Roān Kiti are like to be hard pressed by Roka when the time comes for the payment of our tribute. If we yield it not, then are we all dead men. So give back to us Tokolmé, and take from us Roān Kiti, where ye may for ever dwell in peace, for Roka hath no ill-will against ye.'

"So Kol and two other chiefs, with many slaves bearing presents, went to Tokolmé. But before they set out, Kol sent secretly a messenger to Leā, with these words: 'Though I shall presently come to thee with fair words from Lirou, I bid thee and all thy people take heed, and beware of what thou doest; and keep good watch by night, for Lirou hath an evil mind.'

"This message was given to Leā, and her head men rewarded the messenger, and then held council together, and told Leā what answer she should give.

"This was the answer that she gave to Kol, speaking smilingly, and yet with dignity:—

"'Say to the chief Lirou that I thank him for the rich presents he hath sent me, and that I would that I could yield to his wish, and give unto him this tract of country that his father gave to mine—so that he might build a strong place of refuge against the King Roka. But it cannot be, for we, too, fear Roka. And we are but a few, and some day it might happen that he would fall upon us, and sweep us away as a dead leaf is swept from the branch of a young tree by the strong breath of the storm.'

"So Kol returned to Lirou, and gave him the answer of Leā, and then Lirou and those of his head men who meant ill to Leā and her people, met together in secret, and plotted their destruction.

"And again Kol, who loved the Yap girl he had married, sent a message to Leā, warning her to beware of treachery. And then it was that the Yap people began to build a strong fort, and at night kept a good watch.

"Then Lirou again sent messengers asking that Leā would let him cut down a score of great trees, and Leā sent answer to him: 'Thou art welcome. Cut down one score—or ten score. I give them freely.' This did she for the sake of peace and good-will, though she and her people knew that Lirou meant harm. But whilst a hundred of Lirou's men were cutting the trees the Yap people worked at their fort from dawn till dark, and Lirou's heart was black with rage, for these men of Yap were cunning fort builders, and he saw that, when it was finished, it could never be taken by assault. But he and his chiefs continued to speak fair words, and send presents to Leā and her people, and she sent back

presents in return. Then again Lirou besought her to become his wife, saying that such an alliance would strengthen the friendship between his people and hers; but Leā again refused him, though with pleasant words, and Lirou said with a smooth face: 'Forgive me. I shall pester thee no more, for I see that thou dost not care for me.'

"When two months had passed two score of great trees had been felled and cut into lengths of five fathoms each, and then squared. These were to be the main timbers of the outer wall of Lirou's fort—so he said. But he did not mean to have them carried away, for now he and his chiefs had completed their plans to destroy the people of Yap, and this cutting of the trees was but a subterfuge, designed to throw Leā and her advisers off their guard.

"One day Lirou and his chiefs, dressed in very gay attire, came into Tokolmé, each carrying in his hand a tame ring-dove which is a token of peace and amity, and desired speech of Leā. She came forth, and ordered fine mats, trimmed with scarlet parrots' feathers, to be spread for them upon the ground and received them as honoured guests.

"'We come,' said Lirou, lifting her hand to his forehead, 'to beg thee and all thy people to come to a great feast that will be ready to-morrow, to celebrate the carrying away of the wood thou hast so generously given unto me.'

"'It is well,' said Leā; 'I thank thee. We shall come.'

"Little did Leā and her people know that during the

night, as it rained heavily, some of Lirou's warriors had hidden clubs and spears and axes of stone near where the logs lay and where the feast was to be given. They were hidden under a great heap of chips and shavings that came from the fallen trees.

"At dawn on the day of the feast, three hundred of Lirou's men, all dressed very gaily, marched past Tokolmé, carrying no arms, but bearing baskets of food. They were going, they said, with presents to King Roka to tell him that Lirou would hold faithfully to his promise of tribute.

"'But why,' asked the men of Yap, 'do ye go to-day —which is the day of the feast?'

"'Because the heart of Lirou is glad, and he desires peace with all men—even Roka. And whilst he and those of our people who remain feast with ye men of Yap, and make merriment, we, the tribute messengers, go unto Roka with words of goodwill.'

"Now these words were lies, for when the three hundred men had marched a quarter of a league past Tokolmé, they halted at a place in the forest where they had arms concealed. Then they waited for a certain signal from Lirou, who had said:—

"'When thou hearest the sound of a conch shell at the beginning of the feast, march quickly back and form a circle around us and the people of Yap, but let not one of ye be seen. Then when there comes a second blast rush in, and see that no one escapes. Spare no one but the girl Leā.'

"When the sun was a little high Lirou and all his people —men, women and children—came and made ready the

feast. On each of the squared logs was spread out baked hogs, fowls, pigeons, turtle and fish, and all manner of fruits in abundance, and then also there were placed in the centre of the clearing twenty stone mortars for making kava.

"When all was ready, Leā and her people were bidden to come, and they all came out of the fort, dressed very gaily and singing as is customary for guests to do. And Lirou stepped out from among his people and took Leā by the hand and seated her on a fine mat in the place of honour, and as she sat with Lirou beside her, a man blew a loud, long blast upon a conch shell and the feast began."

Rai's story had interested me keenly, but I was now guilty of a breach of native etiquette—I had to interrupt him to ask how it was that the man Kol and others who were friendly to the Yap people did not give them a final warning of the intended massacre.

"Ah, I forgot to tell thee that. Lirou was as cunning as he was cruel, and ten days before the giving of the feast he had sent away Kol and some others whom he knew to be well disposed to the people of Yap. He sent them to the islands of Pakin—ten leagues from Ponapé, and desired them to catch turtle for him. But with them he sent a trusty man, whom he took into his confidence, and said, 'Tell Rairik, Chief of Pakin, to make some pretext, and prevent Kol from returning to Ponapé for a full moon. And say also that if he yields not to my wish I shall destroy him and his people.'"

"Ah," I said, "Lirou was a Napoleon."

"Who was he?"

"Oh, a great Franki chief, who was as lying and as treacherous and cruel and merciless as Lirou. Some day I will tell thee of him. Now, about the feast."

. . . . . .

"Ah, the feast. After a little while, Lirou, whilst the people ate, said softly to Leā, 'Wilt thou not honour me and be my wife? I promise thee that I shall send away my other wives, and thou alone shalt rule my house and me.'

"Leā was displeased, and her eyes flashed with anger as she drew away from him, and then Lirou seized her by her wrist, and threw up his left hand.

"A long, loud blast sounded from the conch, and then Lirou's men, who were feasting, sprang to the great heap of chips, and seized their weapons. And then began a cruel slaughter—for what could three hundred unarmed people do against so many! But yet some of the men of Yap fought most bravely, and tearing clubs or short stabbing spears from their treacherous enemies, they killed over two score of Lirou's people.

"As Leā beheld the murdering of her kith and kin, she cried piteously to Lirou to at least spare the women and children, but he laughed and bade her be silent. Some of the women and children tried to escape to the fort, but they were met by the men who had been in ambush, and slain ruthlessly.

"When all was over, the bodies were taken to a high cliff, and cast down into the valley below. Then Lirou

and his men entered the fort, and made great rejoicing over their victory.

"Leā sat on a mat with her face in her hands, dumb with grief, and Lirou bade her go to her sleeping-place, telling her to rest, and that he would have speech with her later on when he was in the mood. She obeyed, and when she was unobserved she picked up a short, broad-bladed dagger of *talit* (obsidian) and hid it in her girdle, and then lay down and pretended to sleep. But through the cane lattice-work of her sleeping-place she watched Lirou.

"After Lirou had viewed the fort outside and inside, he sent a man to Leā, bidding her come to him.

"She rose and came slowly to him, with her head bent, and stood before him. Then suddenly she sprang at him, and thrust the dagger into his heart. He fell and died quickly.

"Then Leā leapt over a part of the stone wall where it was low, and ran towards the river, pursued by some of Lirou's men. But she was fleet of foot, crossed the river, and escaped into the jungle and rested awhile. Then she passed out of the jungle into the rough mountain country, and that night she reached King Roka's town.

"Roka made her very welcome, and was filled with anger when she told her story.

"'I will quickly punish these cruel murderers,' he said; 'as for thee, Leā, make this thy home and dwell with us.'

"Roka gathered together his fighting men. Half he sent to Roān Kiti by water, and half he himself led

across the mountains. They fell upon Lirou's people at night, and slew nearly half of the men, and drove all the rest into the mountains, where they remained for many months, broken and hunted men.

"That is the story of Tokolmé."

CHAPTER XVI

"LANO-TŌ"

A WHITE rain squall came crashing through the mountain forest, and then went humming northward across the quiet lake, down over the wooded littoral and far out to sea. Silence once more, and then a mountain cock, who had scorned the sweeping rain, uttered his shrill, cackling, and defiant crow, as he shook the water from his black and golden back and long snaky neck, and savage, fierce-eyed head.

Between two wide-flanking buttresses of a mighty *tamana* tree I had taken shelter, and was comfortably seated on the thick carpet of soft dry leaves, when I heard my name called, and looking up, I saw, a few yards away, the grave face of an elderly Samoan, named Mārisi (Maurice). We were old acquaintances.

"Talofa, Mārisi. What doest thou up here at Lano-tō?" I said, as I shook hands and offered him my pipe for a draw.

"I and my nephew Mana-ese and his wife have come here to trap pigeons. For three days we have been here. Our little hut is close by. Wilt come and rest, and eat?"

"Aye, indeed, for I am tired. And this Lake of Lano-tŏ is a fine place whereat to rest."

Mārisi nodded. "That is true. Nowhere in all Samoa, except from the top of the dead fire mountain in Savai'i, can one see so far and so much that is good to look upon. Come, friend."

I had shot some pigeons, which Mārisi took from me, and began to pluck as he led the way along a narrow path that wound round the edge of the crater, which held the lake in its rugged but verdure-clad bosom. In a few minutes we came to an open-sided hut, with a thatched roof. It stood on the verge of a little tree-clad bluff, overlooking the lake, two hundred feet below. Seated upon some of the coarse mats of coco-nut leaf called *tapa'au* was a fine, stalwart young Samoan engaged in feeding some wild pigeons in a large wicker-work cage. He greeted me in the usual hospitable native manner, and taking some fine mats from one of the house beams, his uncle and I seated ourselves, whilst he went to seek his wife, to bid her make ready an *umu* (earth oven). Whilst he was away, my host and I plucked the pigeons, and also a fat wild duck which Mārisi had shot in the lake that morning. In half an hour the young couple returned, the woman carrying a basket of taro, and the man a bunch of cooking bananas. Very quickly the oven of hot stones was ready, and the game, taro and bananas covered up with leaves.

I had crossed to Lano-tŏ from the village of Safata on the south side of Upolu and was on my way to Apia. The previous night I had slept in the bush on

the summit of the range. Mārisi gravely told me that I had been foolish—the mountain forest was full of ghosts, etc.

Mārisi himself lived in Apia, and he gave me two weeks' local gossip. He and his nephew and niece had come to remain at the lake for a few days, for they had a commission to catch and tame ten pigeons for some district chief, whose daughter was about to be married.

We had a delightful meal, followed by a bowl of kava (mixed with water from the lake), and as I was not pressed for time I accepted my host's invitation to remain for the night, and part of the following day.

This was my fourth or fifth visit to this beautiful mountain lake of Lano-tō (*i.e.*, the Deep Lake), and the oftener I came the more its beauty grew upon me. Alas! its sweet solitude is now disturbed by the cheap Cockney and Yankee tourist globe-trotter who come there in the American excursion steamers. In the olden days only natives frequented the spot—very rarely was a white man seen. To reach it from Apia takes about five hours on foot, but there is now a regular road on which one can travel two-thirds of the way on horseback.

The surface of the water, which is a little over two hundred feet from the rugged rim of the crater, is according to Captain Zemsch, two thousand three hundred feet above the sea, the distance across the crater is nearly one thousand two hundred yards. The water is always cold, but not too cold to bathe in, and during the rainy season—November to March—is frequented

by hundreds of wild duck. All the forest about teems with pigeons, which love the vicinity of Lano-tŏ, on account of the numbers of *masa'oi* trees there, on the rich fruit of which they feed, and all day long, from dawn to dark, their deep *croo!* may be heard mingling with the plaintive cry of the ringdove.

The view from the crater is of matchless beauty—I know of nothing to equal it, except it be Pago Pago harbour in Tutuila, looking southwards from the mountain tops. Here at Lano-tŏ you can see the coast line east and west for twenty miles. Westwards looms the purple dome of Savai'i, thirty miles away. Directly beneath you is Apia, though you can see nothing of it except perhaps some small black spots floating on the smooth water inside the reef. They are ships at anchor. Six leagues to the westward the white line of reef trends away from the shore, makes a sharp turn, and then runs southward. Within this bend the water is a brilliant green, and resting upon it are two small islands. One is Manono, a veritable garden, lined with strips of shining beaches and fringed with cocos. It is the home of the noble families of Samoa, and most of the past great chiefs are buried there. Beyond is the small but lofty crater island of Apolima—a place ever impregnable to assault by natives. Its red, southern face starts steep-to from the sea, the top is crowned with palms, and on the northern side what was once the crater is now a romantic bay, with an opening through the reef, and a tiny, happy little village nestling under the swaying palms. 'Tis one of the sweetest spots in all the wide Pacific. And, thank Heaven, it has but seldom been defiled by the

globe-trotter. The passage is difficult even for a canoe. One English lady, however (the Countess of Jersey), I believe once visited it.

. . . . . .

Under the myriad stars, set in a sky of deepest blue, Mārisi and I lie outside the huts upon our sleeping mats, and talk of the old Samoan days, till it is far into the quiet, voiceless night.

At dawn we are called inside by the woman, who chides us for sleeping in the dew.

"Listen," says Mārisi, raising his hand.

It is the faint, musical gabble of the wild ducks, as they swim across the lake.

"What now?" asks the woman, as her husband looks to his gun. "Hast no patience to sit and smoke till I make an oven and get thee food? The *pato* (ducks) can wait. And first feed the pigeons—thou lazy fellow."

CHAPTER XVII

"OMBRE CHEVALIER"

ONCE, after many years' wanderings in the North and South Pacific as shore trader, supercargo and "recruiter" in the Kanaka labour trade, I became home-sick and returned to my native Australia, with a vague idea of settling down. I began the "settling down" by going to some newly opened gold-fields in North Queensland, wandering about from the Charters Towers "rush" to the Palmer River and Hodgkinson River rushes. The party of diggers I joined were good sterling fellows, and although we did not load ourselves with nuggets and gold dust, we did fairly well at times, especially in the far north of the colony where most of the alluvial gold-fields were rich, and new-comers especially had no trouble in getting on to a good show. I was the youngest of the party, and consequently the most inexperienced, but my mates good-naturedly overlooked my shortcomings as a prospector and digger, especially as I had constituted myself the "tucker" provider when our usual rations of salt beef ran out. I had brought with me a Winchester rifle, a shot gun and plenty of ammunition for

both, and plenty of fishing tackle. So, at such times, instead of working at the claim, I would take my rifle or gun or fishing lines and sally forth at early dawn, and would generally succeed in bringing back something to the camp to serve instead of beef. In the summer months game, such as it was, was fairly plentiful, and nearly all the rivers of North Queensland abound in fish.

In the open country we sometimes shot more plain turkeys than we could eat. When on horseback one could approach within a few yards of a bird before it would take to flight, but on foot it was difficult to get within range of one, unless a rifle was used. In the rainy season all the water holes and lagoons literally teemed with black duck, wood-duck, the black and white Burdekin duck, teal, spur-winged plover, herons and other birds, and a single shot would account for a dozen. My mates, however, like all diggers, believed in and wanted beef—mutton we scarcely ever tasted, except when near a township where there was a butcher, for sheep do not thrive in that part of the colony and are generally brought over in mobs from the Peak Downs District or Southern Queensland.

Our party at first numbered four, but at Townsville (Cleveland Bay) one of our number left us to return to New Zealand on account of the death of his father. And we were a very happy party, and although at times I wearied of the bush and longed for a sight of the sea again, the gold-fever had taken possession of me entirely and I was content.

Once a party of three of us were prospecting in the

vicinity of Scarr's (or Carr's) Creek, a tributary of the Upper Burdekin River. It was in June, and the nights were very cold, and so we were pleased to come across a well-sheltered little pocket, a few hundred yards from the creek, which at this part of its course ran very swiftly between high, broken walls of granite. Timber was abundant, and as we intended to thoroughly prospect the creek up to its head, we decided to camp at the pocket for two or three weeks, and put up a bark hut, instead of shivering at night under a tent without a fire. The first day we spent in stripping bark, piled it up, and then weighted it down heavily with logs. During the next few days, whilst my mates were building the hut, I had to scour the country in search of game, for our supply of meat had run out, and although there were plenty of cattle running in the vicinity, we did not care to shoot a beast, although we were pretty sure that C——, the owner of the nearest cattle station, would cheerfully have given us permission to do so had we been able to have communicated with him. But as his station was forty miles away, and all our horses were in poor condition from overwork, we had to content ourselves with a chance kangaroo, rock wallaby, and such birds as we could shoot, which latter were few and far between. The country was very rough, and although the granite ranges and boulder-covered spurs held plenty of fat rock wallabies, it was heart-breaking work to get within shot. Still, we managed to turn in at nights feeling satisfied with our supper, for we always managed to shoot something, and fortunately had plenty

of flour, tea, sugar, and tobacco, and were very hopeful that we should get on to "something good" by careful prospecting.

On the day that we arrived at the pocket, I went down the steep bank of the creek to get water, and was highly pleased to see that it contained fish. At the foot of a waterfall there was a deep pool, and in it I saw numbers of fish, very like grayling, in fact some Queenslanders call them grayling. Hurrying back to the camp with the water, I got out my fishing tackle (last used in the Burdekin River for bream), and then arose the question of bait. Taking my gun I was starting off to look for a bird of some sort, when one of my mates told me that a bit of wallaby was as good as anything, and cut me off a piece from the ham of one I had shot the previous day. The flesh was of a very dark red hue, and looked right enough, and as I had often caught fish in both the Upper and Lower Burdekin with raw beef, I was very hopeful of getting a nice change of diet for our supper.

I was not disappointed, for the fish literally jumped at the bait, and I had a delightful half-hour, catching enough in that time to provide us with breakfast as well as supper. None of my catch were over half a pound, many not half that weight, but hungry men are not particular about the size of fish. My mates were pleased enough, and whilst we were enjoying our supper before a blazing fire—for night was coming on—we heard a loud coo-e-e from down the creek, and presently C——, the owner of the cattle station, and two of his stockmen with a black boy, rode up and

joined us. They had come to muster cattle in the ranges at the head of the creek, and had come to our "pocket" to camp for the night. C—— told us that we need never have hesitated about killing a beast. "It is to my interest to give prospecting parties all the beef they want," he said; "a payable gold-field about here would suit me very well—the more diggers that come, the more cattle I can sell, instead of sending them to Charters Towers and Townsville. So, when you run short of meat, knock over a beast. I won't grumble. I'll round up the first mob we come across to-morrow, and get you one and bring it here for you to kill, as your horses are knocked up."

The night turned out very cold, and although we were in a sheltered place, the wind was blowing half a gale, and so keen that we felt it through our blankets. However it soon died away, and we were just going comfortably to sleep, when a dingo began to howl near us, and was quickly answered by another somewhere down the creek. Although there were but two of them, they howled enough for a whole pack, and the detestable creatures kept us awake for the greater part of the night. As there was a cattle camp quite near, in a sandalwood scrub, and the cattle were very wild, we did not like to alarm them by firing a shot or two, which would have scared them as well as the dingoes. The latter, C—— told us, were a great nuisance in this part of the run, would not take a poisoned bait, and had an unpleasant trick of biting off the tails of very young calves, especially if the mother was separated with her calf from a mob of cattle.

At daylight I rose to boil a billy of tea. My feet were icy cold, and I saw that there had been a black frost in the night. I also discovered that my string of fish for breakfast was gone. I had hung them up to a low branch not thirty yards from where I had slept. C——'s black boy told me with a grin that the dogs had taken them, and showed me the tracks of three or four through the frosty grass. *He* had slept like a pig all night, and all the dingoes in Australia would not awaken a black fellow with a full stomach of beef, damper and tea. C—— laughed at my chagrin, and told me that native dogs, when game is scarce, will catch fish if they are hungry, and can get nothing else. He had once seen, he told me, two native dogs acting in a very curious manner in a waterhole on the Etheridge River. There had been a rather long drought, and for miles the bed of the river was dry, except for intermittent waterholes. These were all full of fish, many of which had died, owing to the water in the shallower pools becoming too hot for them to exist. Dismounting, he laid himself down on the bank, and soon saw that the dogs were catching fish, which they chased to the edge of the pool, seized them and carried them up on the sand to devour. They made a full meal; then the pair trotted across the river bed, and lay down under a Leichhardt tree to sleep it off. The Etheridge and Gilbert Rivers aboriginals also assured C—— that their own dogs—bred from dingoes—were very keen on catching fish, and sometimes were badly wounded in their mouths by the serrated spur or back fin of catfish.

C—— and his party went off after breakfast, and re-

turned in the afternoon with a small mob of cattle, and my mates, picking out an eighteen months' old heifer, shot her, and set to work, and we soon had the animal skinned, cleaned and hung up, ready for cutting up and salting early on the following morning. We carefully burnt the offal, hide and head, on account of the dingoes, and finished up a good day's work by a necessary bathe in the clear, but too cold water of the creek. We turned in early, tired out, and scarcely had we rolled ourselves in our blankets when a dismal howl made us "say things," and in half an hour all the dingoes in North Queensland seemed to have gathered around the camp to distract us. The noise they made was something diabolical, coming from both sides of the creek, and from the ranges. In reality there were not more than five or six at the outside, but any one would imagine that there were droves of them. Not liking to discharge our guns on account of C——'s mustering, we could only curse our tormentors throughout the night. On the following evening, however, knowing that C—— had finished mustering in our vicinity, we hung a leg bone of the heifer from the branch of a tree on the opposite side of the creek, where we could see it plainly by daylight from our bank—about sixty yards distant. Again we had a harrowing night, but stood it without firing a shot, though one brute came within a few yards of our camp fire, attracted by the smell of the salted meat, but he was off before any one of us could cover him. However, in the morning we were rewarded.

Creeping to the bank of the creek at daylight we looked across, and saw three dogs sitting under the leg

bone, which was purposely slung out of reach. We fired together, and the biggest of the three dropped—the other two vanished like a streak of lightning. The one we killed was a male and had a good coat—a rather unusual thing for a dingo, as the skin is often covered with sores. From that time, till we broke up camp, we were not often troubled by their howling near us—a gun shot would quickly silence their dismally infernal howls.

During July we got a little gold fifteen miles from the head of the creek, but not enough to pay us for our time and labour. However, it was a fine healthy occupation, and our little bark hut in the lonely ranges was a very comfortable home, especially during wet weather, and on cold nights. A good many birds came about towards the end of the month, and we twice rode to the Burdekin and had a couple of days with the bream, filling our pack bags with fish, which cured well with salt in the dry air. Although Scarr's creek was full of "grayling" they were too small for salting; but were delicious eating when fried. During our stay we got enough opossum skins to make a fine eight-feet square rug. Then early one morning we said good-bye to the pocket, and mounting our horses set our faces towards Cleveland Bay, where, with many regrets, I had to part with my mates who were going to try the Gulf country with other parties of diggers. They tried hard to induce me to go with them, but letters had come to me from old comrades in Samoa and the Caroline Islands, tempting me to return. And, of course, they did not tempt in vain; for to us old hands who have toiled by reef and palm the isles of the

southern seas are for ever calling as the East called to Kipling's soldier man. But another six months passed before I left North Queensland and once more found myself sailing out of Sydney Heads on board one of my old ships and in my old berth as supercargo, though, alas! with a strange skipper who knew not Joseph, and with whom I and every one else on board was in constant friction. However, that is another story.

After bidding my mates farewell I returned to the Charters Towers district and picked up a new mate—an old and experienced digger who had found some patches of alluvial gold on the head waters of a tributary of the Burdekin River and was returning there. My new mate was named Gilfillan. He was a hard-working, blue-eyed Scotsman and had had many and strange experiences in all parts of the world—had been one of the civilian fighters in the Indian Mutiny, fur-seal hunting on the Pribiloff Islands in an American schooner, and shooting buffaloes for their hides in the Northern Territory of South Australia, where he had twice been speared by the blacks.

On reaching the head waters of the creek on which Gilfillan had washed out nearly a hundred ounces of gold some months previously, we found to our disgust over fifty diggers in possession of the ground, which they had practically worked out—some one had discovered Gilfillan's old workings and the place was at once "rushed". My mate took matters very philosophically—did not even swear—and we decided to make for the Don River in the Port Denison district,

where, it was rumoured, some rich patches of alluvial gold had just been discovered.

We both had good horses and a pack horse, and as C——'s station lay on our route and I had a standing invitation to pay him a visit (given to me when he had met our party at Scarr's Creek), I suggested that we should go there and spell for a few days. So there we went and C—— made us heartily welcome; and he also told us that the new rush on the Don River had turned out a "rank duffer," and that we would only be wearing ourselves and our horse-flesh out by going there. He pressed us to stay for a week at least, and as we now had no fixed plans for the future we were glad to do so. He was expecting a party of visitors from Charters Towers, and as he wanted to give them something additional to the usual fare of beef and mutton, in the way of fish and game, he asked us to join him for a day's fishing in the Burdekin River.

The station was right on the bank of the river, but at a spot where neither game nor fish were at all plentiful; so long before sunrise on the following morning, under a bright moon and clear sky, we started, accompanied by a black boy, leading a pack horse, for the junction of the Kirk River with the Burdekin, where there was excellent fishing, and where also we were sure of getting teal and wood-duck.

A two hours' easy ride along the grassy, open timbered high banks of the great river brought us to the junction. The Kirk, when running along its course, is a wide, sandy-bottomed stream, with here and there deep rocky pools, and its whole course is fringed with

the everlasting and ever-green sheoaks. We unsaddled in a delightfully picturesque spot, near the meeting of the waters, and in a few minutes, whilst the billy was boiling for tea, C—— and I were looking to our short bamboo rods and lines, and our guns. Then, after hobbling out the horses, and eating a breakfast of cold beef and damper, we started to walk through the high, dew-soaked grass to a deep, boulder-margined pool in which the waters of both rivers mingled.

The black boy who was leading when we emerged on the water side of the fringe of sheoaks, suddenly halted and silently pointed ahead—a magnificent specimen of the "gigantic" crane was stalking sedately through a shallow pool—his brilliant black and orange plumage and scarlet legs glistening in the rays of the early sun as he scanned the sandy bottom for fish. We had no desire to shoot such a noble creature; and let him take flight in his slow, laboured manner. And, for our reward, the next moment "Peter," the black boy, brought down two out of three black duck, which came flying right for his gun from across the river.

Both rivers had long been low, and although the streams were running in the centre of the beds of each, there were countless isolated pools covered with blue-flowered water-lilies, in which teal and other water-birds were feeding. But for the time we gave them no heed.

From one of the pools we took our bait—small fish the size of white-bait, with big, staring eyes, and bodies of a transparent pink with silvery scales. They

were easily caught by running one's hand through the weedy edges, and in ten minutes we had secured a quart-pot full.

"Peter," who regarded our rods with contempt, was the first to reach the boulders at the edge of the big pool, which in the centre had a fair current; at the sides, the water, although deep, was quiet. Squatting down on a rock, he cast in his baited hand-line, and in ten seconds he was nonchalantly pulling in a fine two pound bream. He leisurely unhooked it, dropped it into a small hole in the rocks, and then began to cut up a pipeful of tobacco, before rebaiting!

The water was literally alive with fish, feeding on the bottom. There were two kinds of bream—one a rather slow-moving fish, with large, dark brown scales, a perch-like mouth, and wide tail, and with the sides and belly a dull white; the other a very active game fellow, of a more graceful shape, with a small mouth, and very hard, bony gill plates. These latter fought splendidly, and their mouths being so strong they would often break the hooks and get away—as our rods were very primitive, without reels, and only had about twenty feet of line. Then there were the very handsome and beautifully marked fish, like an English grayling (some of which I had caught at Scarr's Creek); they took the hook freely. The largest I have ever seen would not weigh more than three-quarters of a pound, but their lack of size is compensated for by their extra delicate flavour. (In some of the North Queensland inland rivers I have seen the aborigines net these fish in hundreds in shallow pools.) Some bush-

men persisted, so Gilfillan told me, in calling these fish "fresh water mullet," or "speckled mullet".

The first species of bream inhabit both clear and muddy water; but the second I have never seen caught anywhere but in clear or running water, when the river was low.

But undoubtedly the best eating fresh-water fish in the Burdekin and other Australian rivers is the cat-fish, or as some people call it, the Jew-fish. It is scaleless, and almost finless, with a dangerously barbed dorsal spine, which, if it inflicts a wound on the hand, causes days of intense suffering. Its flesh is delicate and firm, and with the exception of the vertebræ, has no long bones. Rarely caught (except when small) in clear water, it abounds when the water is muddy, and disturbed through floods, and when a river becomes a "banker," cat-fish can always be caught where the water has reached its highest. They then come to feed literally upon the land—that is grass land, then under flood water. A fish bait they will not take—as a rule—but are fond of earthworms, frogs, crickets, or locusts, etc.

Another very beautiful but almost useless fish met with in the Upper Burdekin and its tributaries is the silvery bream, or as it is more generally called, the "bony" bream. They swim about in companies of some hundreds, and frequent the still water of deep pools, will not take a bait, and are only seen when the water is clear. Then it is a delightful sight for any one to lie upon the bank of some ti-tree-fringed creek or pool, when the sun illumines the water and reveals the bottom, and watch a school of these fish swimming closely and very

slowly together, passing over submerged logs, roots of trees or rocks, their scales of pure silver gleaming in the sunlight as they make a simultaneous side movement. I tried every possible bait for these fish, but never succeeded in getting a bite, but have netted them frequently. Their flesh, though delicate, can hardly be eaten, owing to the thousands of tiny bones which run through it, interlacing in the most extraordinary manner. The blacks, however "make no bones" about devouring them.

By 11 A.M. we had caught all the fish our pack-bags could hold—bream, alleged grayling, and half a dozen "gars"—the latter a beautifully shaped fish like the sea-water garfish, but with a much flatter-sided body of shining silver with a green back, the tail and fins tipped with yellow.

We shot but few duck, but on our way home in the afternoon "Peter" and Gilfillan each got a fine plain turkey—shooting from the saddle—and almost as we reached the station slip-rails "Peter," who had a wonderful eye, got a third just as it rose out of the long dry grass in the paddock.

And on the following day, when C——'s guests arrived (and after we had congratulated ourselves upon having plenty for them to eat), they produced from their buggies eleven turkeys, seven wood-duck, and a string of "squatter" pigeons!

"Thought we'd better bring you some fresh tucker, old man," said one of them to C——. "And we have brought you a case of Tennant's ale."

"The world is very beautiful," said C——, stroking

his grey beard, and speaking in solemn tones, "and this is a thirsty day. Come in, boys. We'll put the Tennant's in the water-barrels to cool."

. . . . . .

The first occasion on which I ever saw and caught one of the beautiful fish herein described as grayling was on a day many months previous to our former party camping on Scarr's Creek. We had camped on a creek running into the Herbert River, near the foot of a range of wild, jagged and distorted peaks and crags of granite. Then there were several other parties of prospectors camped near us, and, it being a Sunday, we were amusing ourselves in various ways. Some had gone shooting, others were washing clothes or bathing in the creek, and one of my mates (a Scotsman named Alick Longmuir) came fishing with me. Like Gilfillan, he was a quiet, somewhat taciturn man. He had been twenty-two years in Australia, sometimes mining, at others following his profession of surveyor. He had received his education in France and Germany, and not only spoke the languages of those countries fluently, but was well-read in their literature. Consequently we all stood in a certain awe of him as a man of parts; for besides being a scholar he was a splendid bushman and rider and had a great reputation as the best wrestler in Queensland. Even-tempered, good-natured and possessed of a fund of caustic humour, he was a great favourite with the diggers, and when he sometimes "broke loose" and went on a terrific "spree" (his only fault) he made matters remarkably lively, poured out his hard-earned money like water for a week or so—then

stopped suddenly, pulled himself together in an extraordinary manner, and went about his work again as usual, with a face as solemn as that of an owl.

A little distance from the camp we made our way down through rugged, creeper-covered boulders to the creek, to a fairly open stretch of water which ran over its rocky bed into a series of small but deep pools. We baited our lines with small grey grasshoppers, and cast together.

"I wonder what we shall get here, Alick," I began, and then came a tug and then the sweet, delightful thrill of a game fish making a run. There is nothing like it in all the world—the joy of it transcends the first kiss of young lovers.

I landed my fish—a gleaming shaft of mottled grey and silver with specks of iridescent blue on its head, back and sides, and as I grasped its quivering form and held it up to view my heart beat fast with delight.

"*Ombre chevalier!*" I murmured to myself.

. . . . . .

Vanished the monotony of the Bush and the long, weary rides over the sun-baked plains and the sound of the pick and shovel on the gravel in the deep gullies amid the stark, desolate ranges, and I am standing in the doorway of a peaceful Mission House on a fair island in the far South Seas—standing with a string of fish in my hand, and before me dear old Père Grandseigne with his flowing beard of snowy white and his kindly blue eyes smiling into mine as he extends his brown sun-burnt hand.

"Ah, my dear young friend! and so thou hast brought

me these fish—*ombres chevaliers*, we call them in France. Are they not beautiful! What do you call them in England?"

"I have never been in England, Father; so I cannot tell you. And never before have I seen fish like these. They are new to me."

"Ah, indeed, my son," and the old Marist smiles as he motions me to a seat, "new to you. So? . . . Here, on this island, my sainted colleague Channel, who gave up his life for Christ forty years ago under the clubs of the savages, fished, as thou hast fished in that same mountain stream; and his blood has sanctified its waters. For upon its bank, as he cast his line one eve he was slain by the poor savages to whom he had come bearing the love of Christ and salvation. After we have supped to-night, I shall tell thee the story."

And after the Angelus bells had called, and as the cocos swayed and rustled to the night breeze and the surf beat upon the reef in Singāvi Bay, we sat together on the verandah of the quiet Mission House on the hill above, which the martyred Channel had named "Calvary," and I listened to the old man's story of his beloved comrade's death.

. . . . . .

As Longmuir and I lay on our blankets under the starlit sky of the far north of Queensland that night, and the horse-bells tinkled and our mates slept, we talked.

"Aye, lad," he said, sleepily, "the auld *padre* gave them the Breton name—*ombre chevalier*. In Scotland and England—if ever ye hae the good luck to go there

—ye will hear talk of graylin'. Aye, the bonny graylin' . . . an' the purple heather . . . an' the cry o' the whaups. . . . Lad, ye hae much to see an' hear yet, for all the cruising ye hae done. . . . Aye, the graylin', an' the white mantle o' the mountain mist . . . an' the voices o' the night. . . . Lad, it's just gran'."

. . . . . .

Sleep, and then again the tinkle of the horse-bells at dawn.

CHAPTER XVIII

A RECLUSE OF THE BUSH

THE bank of the tidal river was very, very quiet as I walked down to it through the tall spear grass and sat down upon the smooth, weather-worn bole of a great blackbutt tree, cast up by the river when in flood long years agone. Before me the water swirled and eddied and bubbled past on its way to mingle with the ocean waves, as they were sweeping in across the wide and shallow bar, two miles away.

The sun had dropped behind the rugged line of purple mountains to the west, and, as I watched by its after glow five black swans floating towards me upon the swiftly-flowing water, a footstep sounded near me, and a man with a gun and a bundle on his shoulder bade me "good-evening," and then asked me if I had come from Port —— (a little township five miles away).

Yes, I replied, I had.

"Is the steamer in from Sydney?"

"No. I heard that she is not expected in for a couple of days yet. There has been bad weather on the coast."

The man uttered an exclamation of annoyance, and

laying down his gun, sat beside me, pulled out and lit his pipe, and gazed meditatively across the darkening river. He was a tall, bearded fellow, and dressed in the usual style affected by the timber-getters and other bushmen of the district. Presently he began to talk.

"Are you going back to Port —— to-night, mister?" he asked, civilly.

"No," and I pointed to my gun, bag, and billy can, "I have just come from there. I am waiting here till the tide is low enough for me to cross to the other side. I am going to the Warra Swamp for a couple of days' shooting and fishing, and to-night I'll camp over there in the wild apple scrub," pointing to a dark line of timber on the opposite side.

"Do you mind my coming with you?"

"Certainly not—glad of your company. Where are you going?"

"Well, I was going to Port ——, to sell these platypus skins to the skipper of the steamer; but I don't want to loaf about the town for a couple o' days for the sake of getting two pounds five shillings for fifteen skins. So I'll get back to my humphy. It's four miles the other side o' Warra."

"Then by all means come and camp with me to-night," I said. "I've plenty of tea and sugar and tucker, and after we get to the apple scrub over there we'll have supper. Then in the morning we'll make an early start. It is only ten miles from there to Warra Swamp, and I'm in no hurry to get there."

The stranger nodded, and then, seeking out a suitable tree, tied his bundle of skins to a high branch, so

that it should be out of the reach of dingoes, and said they would be safe enough until his return on his way to the Port. Half an hour later, the tide being low enough, we crossed the river, and under the bright light of myriad stars made our way along the spit of sand to the scrub. Here we lit our camp fire under the trees, boiled our billy of tea, and ate our cold beef and bread. Then we lay down upon the soft, sweet-smelling carpet of dead leaves, and yarned for a couple of hours before sleeping.

By the light of the fire I saw that my companion was a man of about forty years of age, although he looked much older, his long untrimmed brown beard and unkept hair being thickly streaked with grey. He was quiet in manner and speech, and the latter was entirely free from the Great Australian Adjective. His story, as far as he told it to me, was a simple one, yet with an element of tragedy in it.

Fifteen years before, he and his brother had taken up a selection on the Brunswick River, near the Queensland border, and were doing fairly well. One day they felled a big gum tree to split for fencing rails. As it crashed towards the ground, it struck a dead limb of another great tree, which was sent flying towards where the brothers stood; it struck the elder one on the head, and killed him instantly. There were no neighbours nearer than thirty miles, so alone the survivor buried his brother. Then came two months of utter loneliness, and Joyce abandoned his selection to the bush, selling his few head of cattle and horses to his nearest neighbour for a small sum, keeping only one horse for himself.

Then for two or three years he worked as a "hatter" (*i.e.*, single-handed) in various tin-mining districts of the New England district.

One day during his many solitary prospecting trips, he came across a long-abandoned selection and house, near the Warra Swamp (I knew the spot well). He took a fancy to the place, and settled down there, and for many years had lived there all alone, quite content.

Sometimes he would obtain a few weeks' work on the cattle stations in the district, when mustering and branding was going on, by which he would earn a few pounds, but he was always glad to get back to his lonely home again. He had made a little money also, he said, by trapping platypus, which were plentiful, and sometimes, too, he would prospect the head waters of the creeks, and get a little fine gold.

"I'm comfortable enough, you see," he added; "lots to eat and drink, and putting by a little cash as well. Then I haven't to depend upon the storekeepers at Port —— for anything, except powder and shot, flour, salt, tea and sugar. There's lots of game and fish all about me, and when I want a bit of fresh beef and some more to salt down, I can get it without breaking the law, or paying for it."

"How is that?" I inquired.

"There are any amount of wild cattle running in the ranges—all clean-skins" (unbranded), "and no one claims them. One squatter once tried to get some of them down into his run in the open country—he might as well have tried to yard a mob of dingoes."

"Then how do you manage to get a beast?"

"Easy enough. I have an old police rifle, and every three months or so, when my stock of beef is low, I saddle my old pack moke, and start off to the ranges. I know all the cattle tracks leading to the camping and drinking places, and generally manage to kill my beast at or near a waterhole. Then I cut off the best parts only, and leave the rest for the hawks and dingoes. I camp there for the night, and get back with my load of fresh beef the next day. Some I dry-salt, some I put in brine."

Early in the morning we started on our ten miles' tramp through the coastal scrub, or rather forest. Our course led us away from the sea, and nearly parallel to the river, and I thoroughly enjoyed the walk, and my companion's interesting talk. He had a wonderful knowledge of the bush, and of the habits of wild animals and birds, much of which he had acquired from the aborigines of the Brunswick River district. As we were walking along, I inquired how he managed to get platypus without shooting them. He hesitated, and half smiled, and I at once apologised, and said I didn't intend to be inquisitive. He nodded, and said no more; but he afterwards told me he caught them by netting sections of the river at night.

After we had made about five miles we came to the first crossing above the bar. This my acquaintance always used when he visited Port —— (taking the track along the bank on the other side), for the bar was only crossable at especially low tides. Here, although the water was brackish, we saw swarms of "block-headed" mullet and grey bream swimming close in to the sandy

bank, and, had we cared to do so, could have caught a bagful in a few minutes. But we pushed on for another two miles, and on our way shot three "bronze wing" pigeons.

We reached the Warra Swamp at noon, and camped for dinner in a shady "bangalow" grove, so as not to disturb the ducks, whose delightful gabble and piping was plainly audible. We grilled our birds, and made our tea. Whilst we were having a smoke, a truly magnificent white-headed fish eagle lit on the top of a dead tree, three hundred yards away—a splendid shot for a rifle. It remained for some minutes, then rose and went off seaward. Joyce told me that the bird and its mate were very familiar to him for a year past, but that he "hadn't the heart to take a shot at them"—for which he deserved to be commended.

Presently, seeing me cutting some young supplejack vines, my new acquaintance asked me their purpose. I told him that I meant to make a light raft out of dead timber to save me from swimming after any ducks that I might shoot, and that the supplejack was for lashing. Then, to my surprise and pleasure, he proposed that I should go on to his "humphy," and camp there for the night, and he would return to the swamp with me in the morning, join me in a day's shooting and fishing, and then come on with me to the township on the following day.

Gladly accepting his offer, two hours' easy walking brought us to his home—a roughly-built slab shanty with a bark roof, enclosed in a good-sized paddock, in which his old pack horse, several goats and a cow and

calf were feeding. At the side of the house was a small but well-tended vegetable garden, in which were also some huge water-melons—quite ripe, and just the very thing after our fourteen miles' walk. One-half of the house and roof was covered with scarlet runner bean plants, all in full bearing, and altogether the exterior of the place was very pleasing. Before we reached the door two dogs, which were inside, began a terrific din —they knew their master's step. The interior of the house—which was of two rooms—was clean and orderly, the walls of slabs being papered from top to bottom with pictures from illustrated papers, and the floor was of hardened clay. Two or three rough chairs, a bench and a table comprised the furniture, and yet the place had a home-like look.

My host asked me if I could "do" with a drink of bottled-beer; I suggested a slice of water-melon.

"Ah, you're right. But those outside are too hot. Here's a cool one," and going into the other room he produced a monster. It was delicious!

After a bathe in the creek near by, we had a hearty supper, and then sat outside yarning and smoking till turn-in time.

Soon after a sunrise breakfast, we started for the swamp, taking the old packhorse with us, my host leaving food and water for the dogs, who howled disconsolately as we went off.

At the swamp we had a glorious day's sport, although there were altogether too many black snakes about for my taste. We camped there that night, and returned to the port next day with a heavy load

of black duck, some "whistlers," and a few brace of pigeons.

I bade farewell to my good-natured host with a feeling of regret. Some years later, on my next visit to Australia, I heard that he had returned to his boyhood's home—Gippsland in Victoria—and had married and settled down. He was one of the most contented men I ever met, and a good sportsman.

CHAPTER XIX

TE-BARI, THE OUTLAW

THE Island of Upolu, in the Samoan group, averages less than fifteen miles in width, and it is a delightful experience to cross from Apia, or any other town on the north, to the south side. The view to be obtained from the summit of the range that traverses the island from east to west is incomparably beautiful—I have never seen anything to equal it anywhere in the Pacific Isles.

A few years after the Germans had begun cotton planting in Samoa, I brought to Apia ninety native labourers from the Solomon Islands to work on the big plantation at Mulifanua. I also brought with me something I would gladly have left behind—the effects of a very severe attack of malarial fever.

A week or so after I had reached Apia I gave myself a few days' leave, intending to walk across the island to the town of Siumu, where I had many native friends, and try and work some of the fever poison out of my system.

Starting long before sunrise, I was well past Vailima

Mountain—the destined future home of Stevenson—by six o'clock. After resting for an hour at each of the bush villages of Magiagi and Tanumamanono—soon to be the scene of a cruel massacre in the civil war then raging—I began the long, gradual ascent from the littoral to the main range, inhaling deeply of the cool morning air, and listening to the melodious *croo! croo!* of the great blue pigeons, and the plaintive cry of the ringdoves, so well termed manu-tagi (the weeping bird) by the imaginative Samoans.

Walking but slowly, for I was not strong enough for rapid exercise, I reached the summit of the first spur, and again spelled, resting upon a thick carpet of cool, dead leaves. With me was a boy from Tanumamanono named Suisuega-le-moni (The Seeker after Truth), who carried a basket containing some cooked food, and fifty cartridges for my gun. "Sui," as he was called for brevity, was an old acquaintance of mine and one of the most unmitigated young imps that ever ate *taro*, as handsome "as a picture," and a most notorious scandal-monger and spy. He was only thirteen years of age, and was of rebel blood, and, child as he was, he knew that his head stood very insecurely upon his shoulders, and that it would be promptly removed therefrom if any of King Malietoa's troops could catch him spying in *flagrante delicto*. Two years before, he had attached himself to me, and had made a voyage with me to the Caroline Islands, during which he had acquired an enormous vocabulary of sailors' bad language. This gave him great local kudos.

Sui was to accompany me to the top of the range,

and then return, as otherwise he would be in hostile territory.

By four o'clock in the afternoon we had gained a clear spot on the crest of the range, from where we had a most glorious view of the south coast imaginable. Three thousand feet below us were the russet-hued thatched roofs of the houses of Siumu Village; beyond, the pale green water that lay between the barrier reef and the mainland, then the long curving line of the reef itself with its seething surf, and, beyond that again, the deep, deep blue of the Pacific, sparkling brightly in the westering sun.

Leaning my gun against one of the many buttresses of a mighty *masa'oi* tree, I was drinking in the beauty of the scene, when we heard the shrill, cackling scream of a mountain cock, evidently quite near. Giving the boy my gun, I told him to go and shoot it; then sitting down on the carpet of leaves, I awaited his return with the bird, half-resolved to spend the night where I was, for I was very tired and began to feel the premonitory chills of an attack of ague.

In ten minutes the sound of a gun-shot reverberated through the forest aisles, and presently I heard Sui returning. He was running, and holding by its neck one of the biggest mountain cocks I ever saw. As he ran, he kept glancing back over his shoulder, and when he reached me and threw down gun and bird, I saw that he was trembling from head to foot.

"What is the matter?" I asked; "hast seen an *aitu vao* (evil spirit of the forest)?"

"Aye, truly," he said shudderingly, "I have seen a

devil indeed, and the marrow in my bones has gone—I have seen Te-bari, the Tāfito."[1]

I sprang to my feet and seized him by the wrist.

"Where was he?" I asked.

"Quite near me. I had just shot the wild *moa vao* (mountain cock) and had picked it up when I heard a voice say in Samoan—but thickly as foreigners speak: 'It was a brave shot, boy'. Then I looked up and saw Te-bari. He was standing against the bole of a *masa'oi* tree, leaning on his rifle. Round his earless head was bound a strip of *ie mumu* (red Turkey twill), and as I stood and trembled he laughed, and his great white teeth gleamed, and my heart died within me, and——"

I do not want to disgust my readers, but truth compels me to say that the boy there and then became violently sick; then he began to sob with terror, stopping every now and then to glance around at the now darkening forest aisles of grey-barked, ghostly and moss-covered trees.

"Sui," I said, "go back to your home. I have no fear of Te-bari."

In two seconds the boy, who had faced rifle fire time and time again, fled homewards. Te-bari the outlaw was too much for him.

Personally I had no reason to fear meeting the man. In the first place I was an Englishman, and Te-bari was known to profess a liking for Englishmen, though he would eagerly cut the throat of a German or a Samoan if he could get his brawny hands upon it; in

[1] The Samoans term all the natives of the Equatorial Islands "Tāfito".

the second place, although I had never seen the man, I was sure that he would have heard of me from some of his fellow islanders on the plantations, for during my three years' "recruiting" in the Kingsmill and Gilbert Groups, I have brought many hundreds of them to Samoa, Fiji and Tahiti.

Something of his story was known to me. He was a native of the great square-shaped atoll of Maiana, and went to sea in a whaler when he was quite a lad, and soon rose to be boat-steerer. One day a Portuguese harpooner struck him in the face and drew blood—a deadly insult to a Line Islander. Te-bari plunged his knife into the man's heart. He was ironed, and put in the sail-locker; during the night three of the Portuguese sprang in upon him and cut off his ears. A few days later when the ship was at anchor at the Bonin Islands, Te-bari freed himself of his handcuffs and swam on shore. Early on the following morning one of the boats was getting fresh water. She was in charge of the fourth mate—a Portuguese black. Suddenly a nude figure leapt among the men, and clove the officer's head in twain with a tomahawk.

One day Te-bari reappeared among his people at Maiana and took service with a white trader, who always spoke of him as a quiet, hardworking young man, but with a dangerous temper when roused by a fancied wrong. In due time Te-bari took a wife—took her in a very literal sense, by killing her husband and escaping with her to the neighbouring island of Taputeauea (Drummond's Island). She was a pretty, graceful creature of sixteen years of age. Then one day there

came along the German labour brig *Adolph*, seeking "blackbirds" for Samoa, and Te-bari and his pretty wife with fifty other "Tāfitos" were landed at one of the plantations in Upolu.

Young Madame Te-bari was not as good as she ought to have been, and one day the watchful husband saw one of the German overseers give her a thick necklace of fine red beads. Te-bari tore them from her neck, and threw them into the German's face. For this he received a flogging and was mercilessly kicked into insensibility as well. When he recovered he was transferred to another plantation—minus the naughty Nireeungo, who became "Mrs." Peter Clausen. A month passed, and it was rumoured "on the beach" that "No-Ears," as Te-bari was called, had escaped and taken to the bush with a brand-new Snider carbine, and as many cartridges as he could carry, and Mr. Peter Clausen was advised to look out for himself. He snorted contemptuously.

Two young Samoan "bucks" were sent out to capture Te-bari, and bring him back, dead or alive, and receive therefor one hundred bright new Chile dollars. They never returned, and when their bodies were found in a deep mountain gully, it was known that the earless one was the richer by a sixteen-shot Winchester with fifty cartridges, and a Swiss Vetterli rifle, together with some twist tobacco, and the two long *nifa oti*, or "death knives," with which these valorous, but misguided young men intended to remove the earless head of the "Tāfito pig" from his brawny, muscular shoulders.

Te-bari made his way, encumbered as he was with his armoury, along the crest of the mountain range, till

he was within striking distance of his enemy, Clausen, and the alleged Frau Clausen—*née* Nireeungo. He hid on the outskirts of the plantation, and soon got in touch with some of his former comrades. They gave him food, and much useful information.

One night, during heavy rain, when every one was asleep on the plantation, Te-bari entered the overseer's house by the window. A lamp was burning, and by its light he saw his faithless spouse sleeping alone. Clausen —lucky Clausen—had been sent into Apia an hour before to get some medicine for one of the manager's children. Te-bari was keenly disappointed. He would only have half of his revenge. He crept up to the sleeper, and made one swift blow with the heavy *nifa oti*. Then he became very busy for a few minutes, and a few hours later was back in the mountains, smoking Clausen's tobacco, and drinking some of Clausen's corn schnapps.

When Clausen rode up to his house at three o'clock in the morning, he found the lamp was burning brightly. Nireeungo was lying on the bed, covered over with a quilt of navy blue. He called to her, but she made no answer, and Clausen called her a sleepy little pig. Then he turned to the side table to take a drink of schnapps—on the edge of it was Nireeungo's head with its two long plaits of jet-black hair hanging down, and dripping an ensanguined stream upon the matted floor.

Clausen cleared out of Samoa the very next day. Te-bari had got upon his nerves.

. . . . . .

The forest was dark by the time I had lit a fire

between two of the wide buttresses of the great tree, and I was shaking from head to foot with ague. The attack, however, only lasted an hour, and then came the usual delicious after-glow of warmth as the blood began to course riotously through one's veins and give that temporary and fictitious strength accompanied by hunger, that is one of the features of malarial fever.

Sitting up, I began to pluck the mountain cock, intending to grill the chest part as soon as the fire was fit. Then I heard a footstep on the leaves, and looking up I saw Te-bari standing before me.

"*Ti-ā ka po*" (good evening), I said quietly, in his own language, "will you eat with me?"

He came over to me, still grasping his rifle, and peered into my face. Then he put out his hand, and sat down quietly in front of me. Except for a girdle of dracæna leaves around his waist he was naked, but he seemed well-nourished, and, in fact, fat.

"Will you smoke?" I said presently, passing him a plug of tobacco and my sheath knife, for I saw that a wooden pipe was stuck in his girdle of leaves. He accepted it eagerly.

"Do you know me, white man?" he asked abruptly, speaking in the Line Islands tongue.

I nodded. "You are Te-bari of Maiana. The boy was frightened of you and ran away."

He showed his gleaming white teeth in a semi-mirthful, semi-tigerish grin. "Yes, he was afraid. I would have shot him; but I did not because he was with you. What is your name, white man?"

I told him.

"Ah, I have heard of you. You were with Kapitan Ebba (Captain Ever) in the *Leota*."

He filled his pipe, lit it, and then extended his hand to me for the half-plucked bird, and said he would finish it. Then he looked at me inquiringly.

"You have the shaking sickness of the western islands. It is not good for you to lie here on the leaves. Come with me. I shall give you good food to eat, and coco-nut toddy to drink."

I asked him where he got his toddy from, as there were no coco-nut trees growing so high up in the mountains. He laughed.

"I have a sweetheart in Siumu. She brings it to me. You shall see her to-night. Come."

Stooping down, he lifted me up on his right shoulder as if I were a child, and then, with his own rifle and my gun and bag and the mountain cock tucked under his left arm, he set off at a rapid pace towards one of the higher spurs of the range. Nearly an hour later I found myself in a cave, overlooking the sea. On the floor were a number of fine Samoan mats and a well-carved *aluga* (bamboo pillow).

I stretched myself out upon the mats, again shivering with ague, and Te-bari covered me over with a thick *tappa* cloth. Then he lit a fire just outside the cave, and came back to me.

"You are hungry," he said, as he expanded his big mouth and grinned pleasantly. Then from the roof of the cave he took down a basket containing cold baked pigeons, fish and yams.

I ate greedily and soon after fell asleep. When I awoke it seemed to be daylight—in reality it was only a little past midnight, but a full bright moon was shining into the cave. Seated near me were my host and a young woman—the "sweetheart". I recognised her at once as Sa Laea, the widow of a man killed in the fighting a few months previously. She was about five and twenty years of age, very handsome, and quiet in her demeanour. As far as I knew she had an excellent reputation, and I was astonished at her consorting with an outlawed murderer. She came over and shook hands, asked if I felt better, and should she "lomi-lomi" (massage) me. I thanked her and gladly accepted her offer.

An hour before dawn she bade me good-bye, urging me to remain, and rest with her earless lover for a day or two, instead of coming on to Siumu, where there was an outbreak of measles.

"When I come to-morrow night," she said, "I will bring a piece of kava root and make kava for you."

The news about the measles decided me. I resolved to at least spend another day and night with my host. He was pleased.

Soon after breakfast he showed me around. His retreat was practically impregnable. One man with a supply of breech-loading ammunition could beat off a hundred foes. On the roof of the cave was a hole large enough to let a man pass through, and from the top itself there was a most glorious view. A mile away on the starboard hand, and showing through the forest green, was a curving streak of bright red—it was the road,

or rather track, that led to Siumu. We filled our pipes, sat down and talked.

How long had he lived there? I asked. Five months. He had found the cave one day when in chase of a wild sow and her litter. Afraid of being shot by the Siumu people? No, he was on good terms with *them*. Very often he would shoot a wild pig and carry it to a certain spot on the road, and leave it for the villagers. But he could not go into the village itself. It was too risky—some one might be tempted to get those hundred Chile dollars from the Germans. Food? There was plenty. Hundreds of wild pigs in the mountains, and thousands of pigeons. The pigs he shot with his Snider, the pigeons he snared, for he had no shot gun, and would very much like to have one. Twice every week Sa Laea brought him food. Tobacco too, sometimes, when she could buy it or beg it from the trader at Siumu. Sometimes he would cross over to the northern watershed and catch a basketful of the big speckled trout which teem in the mountain pools. Some of these he would send by Sa Laea to the chief of Siumu, who would send him in return a piece of kava, and some young drinking cocoanuts as a token of good-will. Once when he went to fish he found a young Samoan and two girls about to net a pool. The man fired at him with his pigeon gun and the pellets struck him in the chest. Then he (Te-bari) shot the man through the chest with his Winchester. No, he did not harm the girls—he let them run away.

Sa Laea was a very good girl. Whenever he trapped a *manu-mea* (the rare *Didunculus*, or tooth-billed pigeon) she would take it to Apia and sell it for five

dollars—sometimes ten. He was saving this money. When he had forty dollars he and Sa Laea were going to leave Samoa and go to Maiana. Kapitan Cameron had promised Sa Laea to take them there when they had forty dollars. Perhaps when his schooner next came to Siumu they would have enough money, etc.

. . . . . .

During the day I shot a number of pigeons, and when Sa Laea appeared soon after sunset we had them cooked and ready. We made a delicious meal, but before eating the lady offered up the usual evening prayer in Samoan, and Te-bari the Earless sat with closed eyes like a saint, and gave forth a sonorous *A-mene!* when his lady-love ceased.

I left my outlaw friend next morning. Sa Laea came with me, for I had promised to buy him a pigeon gun (costing ten dollars), a bag of shot, powder and caps. I fulfilled my promise and the woman bade me farewell with protestations of gratitude.

. . . . . .

A few months later Te-bari and Sa Laea left the island in Captain Cameron's schooner, the *Manahiki*. I trust they "lived happily ever afterwards".

CHAPTER XX

"THE DANDIEST BOY THAT EVER STOOD UP IN A BOAT"

NINE years had come and gone since I had last seen Nukutavake and its amiable brown-skinned people, and now as I again stepped on shore and scanned the faces of those assembled on the beach to meet me, I missed many that I had loved in the old, bright days when I was trading in the Paumotus. For Death, in the hideous shape of small-pox, had been busy, taking the young and strong and passing by the old and feeble.

It was a Sunday, and the little isle was quiet—as quiet as the ocean of shining silver on which our schooner lay becalmed, eight miles beyond the foaming surf of the barrier reef.

Teveiva, the old native pastor, was the first one to greet me, and the tears rolled down his cheeks as he spoke to me in his native Tahitian, bade me welcome, and asked me had I come to sojourn with "we of Nukutavake, for a little while".

"Would that it were so, old friend. But I have only come on shore for a few hours, whilst the ship is becalmed—to greet old friends dear to my heart, and never

forgotten since the days I lived among ye, nigh upon a half-score years ago. But, alas, it grieves me that many are gone."

A low sob came from the people, as they pressed around their friend of bygone years, some clasping my hands and some pressing their faces to mine. And so, hand in hand, and followed by the people, the old teacher and I walked slowly along the shady path of drooping palms, and came to and entered the quiet mission house, through the open windows of which came the sigh of the surf, and the faint call of sea-birds.

Some women, low-voiced and gentle, brought food, and young drinking nuts upon platters of leaf, and silently placed them before the White Man, who touched the food with his hand and drank a little of a coco-nut, and then turned to Teveiva and said:—

"O friend, I cannot eat because of the sorrow that hath come upon thee. Tell me how it befel."

Speaking slowly, and with many tears, the old teacher told of how a ship from Tahiti had brought the dread disease to the island, and how in a little less than two months one in every three of the three hundred and ten people had died, and of the long drought that followed upon the sickness, when for a whole year the sky was as brass, and the hot sun beat down upon the land, and withered up the coco-palms and pandanus trees; and only for the night dews all that was green would have perished. And now because of the long drought men were weak, and sickening, and women and children were faint from want of food.

"It is as if God hath deserted us," said the old man.

"Nay," I assured him, "have no fear. Rain is near. It will come from the westward as it has come to many islands which for a year have been eaten up with drought and hunger like this land of Nukutavake. Have no fear, I say. Wind and much heavy rain will soon come from the west."

Then I wrote a few lines to the skipper.

"Send this letter to the ship by my boat," I said to Teveiva, "and the captain will fill the boat with food. It is the ship's gift to the people."

And then for the first time since the island had been smitten, the poor women and children laughed joyously, and the men sprang to their feet, and with loud shouts ran to the boat with the messenger who carried the letter.

"Come, old friend," I said to the teacher, "walk with me round the island. I would once more look upon the lagoon and sit with you a little while as we have sat many times before, under the great *toa* tree that grows upon the point on the weather side."

And so we two passed out of the mission house, and hand in hand, like children, went into the quiet village and along the sandy path that wound through the vista of serried, grey-boled palms, till we came to the white, inner beach of the calm lagoon, which shone and glistened like burnished silver. On the beach were some canoes.

Half a cable length from the shore, a tiny, palm-clad islet floated on that shining lake, and the drooping fronds of the palms cast their shadows upon the crystal water. Between the red-brown boles of the trees

there showed something white. The old man pointed to it and said:—

"Wilt come and look at the white man's grave? 'Tis well kept—as we promised his mother should be done."

Teveiva launched a canoe and we paddled gently over to the isle, which was barely half an acre in extent. From the beach there ran a narrow path, neatly gravelled and bordered with many-hued crotons; it led to a low square enclosure of coral stone cemented with lime. Within the walls bright crotons grew thickly, and in the centre stood a plain slab of marble on which was carved:—

WALTER TALLIS,
BOAT-STEERER OF THE SHIP *ASIA*.
DIED, DECEMBER 25, 1869, AGED 21.
ERECTED BY HIS MOTHER.

I sat on the wall, and looked thoughtfully at the marble slab.

"'Tis twelve years since, Teveiva."

"Aye, since last Christmas Day. And every year his mother sends a letter and asks, 'Is my boy's grave well kept?' and I write and say, 'It is well tended. One day in every week the women and girls come and weed the path, and see that the plants thrive. This have we always done since thou sent the marble slab.' She sends her letters to the English missionary at Papeite, and he sends mine to her in far away Beretania (Britain)."

"Poor fellow," I thought; "it was just such a day

as this—hot and calm—when we laid him here under the palms."

. . . . . .

On that day, twelve years before, the *Asia* lay becalmed off the island, and the skipper lowered his boat and came on shore to buy some fresh provisions. He was a cheery old fellow, with snow-white hair, and was brimming over with good spirits, for the *Asia* had had extraordinary good luck.

"Over a thousand barrels of sparm oil under hatches already, and the *Asia* not out nine months," he said to me, "and we haven't lost a boat, nor any whale we fastened to yet. And this boy here," and he turned and clapped his hand on the shoulder of a young, handsome and stalwart youth, who had come with him, "is my boat-steerer, Walter Tallis, and the dandiest lad with an iron that ever stood up in a boat's bow. Forty-two years have I been fishin', and until Walter here shipped on the old *Asia*, thought that the Almighty never made a good boat-steerer or boat-header outer eny one but a Yankee or a Portugee—or maybe a Walker Injun. But Walter, though he *is* a Britisher, was born fer whale-killin'—and thet's a fact."

I shook hands with the young man, who laughed as he said:—

"Captain Allen is always buttering me up. But there are as good, and better men than me with an iron on board the *Asia*. But I certainly have had wonderful luck—for a Britisher," and he smiled slyly at his captain.

Suddenly, we were chatting and smoking on the

verandah, there came a thrilling cry from the crew of the whaleboat, lying on the beach fifty yards away.

"*Blo-o-w ! bl-o-o-w !*"

And from the throats of three hundred natives came a roar "*Te folau ! te folau !*" ("A whale ! a whale !").

The skipper and his boat-steerer sprang to their feet and looked seaward, and there, less than a mile from the shore, was a mighty bull cachalot, leisurely making his way through the glassy sea, swimming with head up, and lazily rolling from side to side as if his one hundred tons of bulk were as light as the weight of a flying-fish.

"Now, mister, you shall see what Walter and I can do with that fish," cried the skipper to me. "And when we've settled him, and the other boats are towing him off to the ship, Walter and I will come on shore again and hev something to eat—if you will invite us."

The boat flashed out from the beach, swept out of the passage through the reef, and in twenty minutes was within striking distance of the mighty cetacean. And, watching from the verandah, I saw the young harpooner stand up and bury his first harpoon to the socket, following it instantly with a second. Then slowly sank the huge head, and up came the vast flukes in the air, and Leviathan sounded into the ocean depths as the line spun through the stem notch, and the boat sped over the mirror-like sea. In ten minutes she was hidden from view by a point of land, and the last that we on the shore saw was "the dandiest lad that ever stood up in a boat's bow" going aft to the steer-oar, and the old white-headed skipper taking his

place to use the deadly lance. And then at the same time that the captain's boat disappeared from view, I noticed that the *Asia* had lowered her four other boats, which were pulling with furious speed in the direction which the "fast" boat had taken.

"Something must have gone wrong with the captain's boat," I thought.

Something had gone wrong, for half an hour later one of the four "loose" boats pulled into the beach, and the old skipper, with tears streaming down his rugged cheeks, stepped out, trembling from head to foot.

"My dandy boy, my poor boatsteerer," he said huskily to me—"that darned whale fluked us, and near cut him in half. Poor lad, he didn't suffer; for death came sudden. An' he is the only son of his mother. Can I bring him to your house?"

Very tenderly and slowly the whaleboat's crew carried the crushed and mutilated form of the "dandiest boy" to the house, and whilst I helped the *Asia's* cooper make a coffin, Teveiva sat outside with the heart-broken old skipper, and spoke to him in his broken English of the Life Beyond. And so Walter Tallis, the last of an old Dorset family, was laid to rest in the little isle in the quiet lagoon.

. . . . . .

For two days our schooner lay in sight of the island; and then, as midnight came, the blue sky became black, and the ship was snugged down for the coming storm. The skipper sent up a rocket so that it might be seen by the people on shore—to verify my prophecy about a change in the weather.

Came then the wind and the sweet, blessed rain, and as the schooner, under reefed canvas, plunged to the rising sea, the folk of Nukutavake, I felt certain, stood outside their houses, and let the cooling Heaven-sent streams drench their smooth, copper-coloured skins, whilst good old Teveiva gave thanks to God.

CHAPTER XXI

THE PIT OF MAOTĀ

FOR the Samoans I have always had a great admiration and affection. Practically I began my island career in Samoa. More than a score of years before Robert Louis Stevenson went to die on the verdured slopes of Vailima Mountain, where he now rests, I was gaining my living by running a small trading cutter between the beautiful islands of Upolu, Savai'i, and Tutuila, and the people ever had my strong sympathies in their struggle against Germany for independence. Even so far back as 1865, German agents were at work throughout the group, sowing the seeds of discord, encouraging the chiefs of King Malietoa to rebel, so that they could set up a German puppet in his place. And unfortunately they have succeeded only too well, and Samoa, with the exception of the Island of Tutuila, is now German territory. But it is as well, for the people are kindly treated by their new masters.

The Samoans were always a warlike race. When not unitedly repelling invasion by the all-conquering Tongans who sent fleet after fleet to subjugate the country, they were warring among themselves upon various pretexts — successions to chiefly titles, land

disputes, abuse of neutral territory, and often upon the most trivial pretexts. In my own time I witnessed a sanguinary naval encounter between the people of the island of Manono, and a war-party of ten great canoes from the district of Lepā on the island of Upolu. I saw sixteen decapitated heads brought on shore, and personally attended many of the wounded. And all this occurred through the Lepā people having at a dance in their village sung a song in which a satirical allusion was made to the Manono people having once been reduced to eating shell-fish. The result was an immediate challenge from Manono, and in all nearly one hundred men lost their lives, villages were burnt, canoes destroyed, and thousands of coco-nut and bread-fruit trees cut down and plantations ruined.

Sometimes in battle the Samoans were extremely chivalrous, at others they were demons incarnate, as merciless, cold-blooded, and cruel as the Russian police who slaughter women and children in the streets of the capital of the Great White Czar, and I shall now endeavour to describe one such terrible act, which after many years is still spoken of with bated breath, and even amidst the suppressed sobs and falling tears of the descendants of those who suffered.

On the north coast of Upolu there is a populous town and district named Fasito'otai. It is part of the A'ana division of Upolu, and is noted, even in Samoa, a paradise of Nature, for its extraordinary fertility and beauty.

The A'ana people at this time were suffering from the tyranny of Manono, a small island which boasted of

the fact of its being the birthplace and home of nearly all the ruling chiefs of Samoa, and the extraordinary respect with which people of chiefly lineage are treated by Samoans, generally led them to suffer the greatest indignities and oppressions by the haughty and warlike Manonoans, who exacted under threats a continuous tribute of food, fine mats and canoes. Finally, a valorous young chief named Tausaga—though himself connected with Manono—revolted, and he and his people refused to pay further tribute to Manono, and a bloody struggle was entered upon.

For some months the war continued. No mercy was shown on either side to the vanquished, and there is now a song which tells of how Palu, a girl of seventeen, with a spear thrust half through her bosom by her brother-in-law, a chief of Manono, shot him through the chest with a horse pistol, and then breaking off the spear, knelt beside the dying man, kissed him as her "brother" and then decapitated him, threw the head to her people with a cry of triumph—and died.

At first the A'ana people were victorious, and the haughty Manonoans were driven off into their fleets of war canoes time and time again. Then Manono made alliance with other powerful chiefs of Savai'i and Upolu against A'ana, and two thousand of them, after great slaughter, occupied the town of Fasito'otai, and the A'ana people retired to inland fortresses, resolved to fight to the very last. Among the leaders of the defeated people were two white men—an Englishman and an American—whose valour was so much admired, even by the Manono people, that they were openly

solicited to desert the A'ana people, and come over to the other side, where great honours and gifts of lands awaited them. To their credit, these two unknown men rejected the offer with scorn, and announced their intention to die with the people with whom they had lived for so many years. At their instance, many of the Manono warriors who had been captured had been spared, and kept prisoners, instead of being ruthlessly decapitated in the usual Samoan fashion, and their heads exhibited, with much ignominy, from one village to another, as trophies.

For two years the struggle continued, the Manonoans generally proving victorious in many bloody battles. Then Fasito'otai was surprised in the night, and two-thirds of its defenders, including many women and children, slaughtered. Among those who died were the two white men. They fell with thirty young men, who covered the retreat of the survivors of the defending force.

The extraordinary valour which the A'ana people had displayed, exasperated the Manono warriors to deeds of unnamable violence to whatever prisoners fell into their cruel hands. One man—an old Manono chief—who had taken part in the struggle, told me with shame that he saw babies impaled on bayonets and spears carried exultingly from one village to another.

Broken and disorganised, the beaten A'ana people dispersed in parties large and small. Some sought refuge in the mountain forests, others put to sea in frail canoes, and mostly all perished, but one party of seventeen in three canoes succeeded in reaching Uea (Wallis

Island), three hundred miles to the westward of Samoa. Among them was a boy of seven years of age, who afterwards sailed with me in a labour vessel. He well remembered the horrors of that awful voyage, and told me of his seeing his father "take a knife and open a vein in his arm so that a baby girl, who was dying of hunger, could drink".

Relentless in their hate of the vanquished foe, the Manono warriors established a cordon around them from the mountain range that traverses the centre of Upolu to the sea, and at last, after many engagements, drove them to the beach, where a final battle was fought. Exhausted, famine-stricken, and utterly disheartened by their continuous reverses, the unfortunate A'ana people were easily overcome, and the fighting survivors surrendered, appealing to their enemies to at least spare the lives of their women and children.

But no mercy was shown. As night began to fall, the Manonoans began to dig a huge pit at a village named Maotā, a mile from the scene of the battle, and as some dug, others carried an enormous quantity of dead logs of timber to the spot. By midnight the dreadful funeral pyre was completed.

In case that it might be thought by my readers that I am exaggerating the horrors of "The Pit of Maotā," I will not here relate what I, personally, was told by people who were present at the awful deed, but repeat the words of Mr. Stair, an English missionary of the London Missionary Society, whose book, entitled *Old Samoa*, tells the story in quiet, yet dramatic language, and although in regard to some minor details he was

misinformed, his account on the whole is correct, and is the same as was told to me by men who had actually participated in the tragedy.

The awful preparations were completed, and then the victors, seizing those of their captives who were bound on account of their strength and had a few hours previously surrendered, hurried them to the fatal pit, in which the huge pile of timber had been lit. And as the flames roared and ascended, and the darkness of the surrounding forest was made as light as day, the first ten victims of four hundred and sixty-two were cast in to burn, amid the howls and yells of their savage captors.

Mr. Stair says: "This dreadful butchery was continued during one or two days and nights, fresh timber being heaped on from time to time, as it was with difficulty that the fire could be kept burning, from the number of victims who were ruthlessly sacrificed there.

"The captives from Fasito'otai were selected for the first offerings, and after them followed others in quick succession, night and day, early and late, until the last wretched victim had been consumed. Most heart-rending were the descriptions I received from persons who had actually looked on the fearful scenes enacted there.

"Innocent children skipped joyfully along the pathway by the side of their conductors and murderers,[1] deceived by the cruel lie that they were to be spared, and were then on their way to bathe; when suddenly

[1] I was told that the poor children were led away as they thought to be given *si mea ai vela*—"something hot" (to eat).—[L.B.]

the blazing pile (in the Pit of Noatā) with the horrid sight of their companions and friends being thrown alive into the midst, told them the dreadful truth; whilst their terror was increased by the yells of savage triumph of the murderers, or the fearful cries of the tortured victims which reached their ears."

When I first saw the dreadful Tito (pit) of Moatā, it was at the close of a calm, windless day. I had been pigeon-shooting in the mountain forest, and was accompanied by a stalwart young Samoan warrior. As we were returning to Fasito'otai, he asked me if I would come a little out of the way and look at the "Tito," a place he said "that is to our hearts, and is, holy ground". He spoke so reverently that I was much impressed.

Following a winding path we suddenly came in view of the pit. The sides were almost covered with many beautiful varieties of crotons, planted there by loving hands, and it was very evident to me that the place was indeed holy ground. At the bottom of the pit was a dreadful reminder of the past—a large circle of black charcoal running round the sides, and enclosing in the centre a large space which at first I thought was snow-white sand, but on descending into the pit with uncovered head, and looking closer, found it was composed of tiny white coral pebbles. Hardly a single leaf or twig marred the purity of the whiteness of the cover under which lay the ashes of nearly five hundred human beings. Every Saturday the women and children of Fasito'otai and the adjacent villages visited the place, and reverently removed every bit of *débris*,

and the layer of stones, carefully selected of an equal size, was renewed two or three times a year as they became discoloured by the action of the rain. Encompassing the wooded margin of the pit were numbers of orange, lime and banana trees, all in full fruit. These were never touched—to do so would have been sacrilege, for they were sacred to the dead. All around us were hundreds of wood-doves and pigeons, and their peaceful notes filled the forest with saddening melody.

"No one ever fires a gun here," said my companion softly, "it is forbidden. And it is to my mind that the birds know that it is a sacred place and holy ground."

CHAPTER XXII

VANĀKI, THE STRONG SWIMMER

ON the afternoon of the 4th of June, 1885, the Hawaiian labour schooner *Mana*, of which I was "recruiter," was beating through Apolima Straits, which divide the islands of Upolu and Savai'i. The south-east trade was blowing very strongly and a three-knot current setting against the wind had raised a short, confused sea, and our decks were continually flooded. But we had to thrash through it with all the sail we could possibly carry, for among the sixty-two Gilbert Islands "recruits" I had on board three had developed symptoms of what we feared was small-pox, and we were anxious to reach the anchorage off the town of Mulifanua at the west end of Upolu before dark. At Mulifanua there was a large German cotton plantation, employing four hundred "recruited" labourers, and on the staff of European employés was a resident doctor. In the ordinary course of things we should have gone on to Apia, which was twenty miles farther on, and our port of destination, and handed over my cargo of "recruits" to the manager of the German firm there; but as Mulifanua Plantation was also owned by them, and my "recruits" would

probably be sent there eventually, the captain and I decided to land the entire lot at that place, instead of taking them to Apia, where the European community would be very rough upon us if the disease on board did turn out to be small-pox.

As the skipper and I were standing aft, watching the showers of spray that flew over the schooner every time a head sea smacked her in the face, one of the hands shouted out that there was a man in the water, close to on the weather bow. Hauling our head sheets to windward we head-reached towards him, and in a few minutes the man, who was swimming in the most gallant fashion, was alongside, and clambered on board. He was a rather dark-skinned Polynesian, young, and of extremely powerful physique.

"Thanks, good friends," he said, speaking in halting Samoan. "'Tis a high sea in which to swim. Yet," and here he glanced around him at the land on both sides, "I was half-way across."

"Come below," I said, "and take food and drink, and I will give you a *lava-lava* (waistcloth)." (He was nude.)

He thanked me, and then again his keen dark eyes were fixed upon Savai'i—three miles distant.

"Art bound to Savai'i?" he asked quickly.

"Nay. We beat against the wind. To-night we anchor at Mulifanua."

"Ah!" and his face changed, "then I must leave, for it is to Savai'i I go," and he was about to go over the rail when we held him back.

"Wait, friend. In a little time the ship will be close in to the passage through the reef at Salelelogа" (a town

of Savai'i), and then as we put the ship about, thou canst go on thy way. Why swim two leagues and tempt the sharks when there is no need. Come below and eat and drink, and have no fear. We shall take thee as near to the passage as we can."

The skipper came below with us, and after providing our visitor with a navy blue waistcloth, we gave him a stiff tumbler of rum, and some bread and meat. He ate quickly and then asked for a smoke, and in a few minutes more we asked him who he was, and why he was swimming across the straits. We spoke in Samoan.

"Friends," he said, "I will tell the truth. I am one of the *kau galuega* (labourers) on Mulifanua Plantation. Yesterday being the Sabbath, and there being no work, I went into the lands of the Samoan village to steal young nuts and *taro*. I had thrown down and husked a score, and was creeping back to my quarters by a side path through the grove, when I was set upon by three young Samoan *manaia* (bloods) who began beating me with clubs—seeking to murder me. We fought, and I, knowing that death was upon me, killed one man with a blow of my *tori nui*[1] (husking stick) of iron-wood, and then drove it deep into the chest of another. Then I fled, and gaining the beach, ran into the sea so that I might swim to Savai'i, for there will I be safe from pursuit."

"'Tis a long swim, man—'tis five leagues."

He laughed and expanded his brawny chest.

"What is that to me? I have swam ten leagues many times."

[1] A heavy, pointed stick of hardwood, used for husking coco-nuts.

"Where do you belong?" asked the skipper in English.

He answered partly in the same language and partly in his curious Samoan.

"I am of Anuda.[1] My name is Vanāki. Two years ago I came to Samoa in a German labour ship to work on the plantations, for I wanted to see other places, and earn money, and then return to Anuda and speak of the things I had seen. It was a foolish thing of me. The German *suis* (overseers) are harsh men. I worked very hard on little food. It was for that I had to steal. And I am but one man from Anuda, and there are four hundred others from many islands—black-skinned, man-eating, woolly-haired pigs from the Solomon and New Hebrides, and fierce fellows like these Tafito[2] men from the Gilbert Islands such as I now see here on this ship. No one of them can speak my tongue of Anuda. And now I am a free man."

"You are a plucky fellow," said the captain, "and deserve good luck. Here, take this dollar, and tie it up in the corner of your waistcloth. You can buy yourself some tobacco from the white trader at Salelelogo."

"Ah, yes, indeed. But" (and here he dropped into Samoan again, and turned to me) "I would that the good captain would take me as a sailor for his next voyage. I was for five years with Captain Macleod of Nouméa. And I am a good man—honest, and no boaster."

[1] Anuda or Cherry Island is an outlier of the Santa Cruz Group, in the South Pacific. The natives are more of the Polynesian than the Melanesian type, and are a fine, stalwart race.

[2] Tafitos—natives of the Pacific Equatorial Islands such as the Gilbert Group.

I shook my head. "It cannot be. From Mulifanua we go to Apia. And there will be news there of what thou hast done yesterday, and we cannot hide a man on this small ship." And then I asked the captain what he thought of the request.

"We ought to try and work it," said the skipper. "If he was five years with Jock Macleod he's all right."

We questioned him further, and he satisfied us as to his *bona-fides*, giving us the names of many men—captains and traders—known to us intimately.

"Vanāki," I said, "this is what may be done, but you must be quick, for presently we shall be close to the passage off Salelelogа, and must go about. When you land, go to Miti-loa the chief, and talk to him privately. There is bad blood between his people and those of Mulifanua——"

"I know it. It has been so for two years past."

"Now, listen. Miti-loa and the captain here and I are good friends. Tell him that you have seen us. Hide nothing from him of yesterday. He is a strong man."

"I know it. Who does not, in this part of Samoa know of Miti-loa?"[1]

"That is true. And Miti knows us two *papalagi*[2] well. Stay with him, work for him, and do all that he may ask. He will ask but little—perhaps nothing. In twenty days from now, this ship will be at Apia ready for sea again. We go to the Tokelaus" (Gilbert Islands)

[1] Miti-loa—"Long Dream".
[2] White men—foreigners.

"or else to the Solomons, and if thou comest on board in the night who is to know of it but Miti-loa and thyself?"

The mate put his head under the flap of the skylight. "Close on to the reef, sir. Time to go about."

"All right, Carey. Put her round. Now Vanāki, up on deck, and over you go."

Vanāki nodded and smiled, and followed us. Then quickly he took off his *lava-lava*, deftly wrapped it about his head like an Indian turban, and held out his hand in farewell, and every one on board cheered as he leapt over the side, and began his swim to the land. From the cross-trees I watched him through my glasses, saw him enter the passage into smooth water, and disdaining to rest on any of the exposed and isolated projections of reef which lined the passage, continue his course towards the village. Then a rain squall hid him from view, but we knew that he was safe.

That evening we landed our "recruits" at Mulifanua, and after thoroughly disinfecting the ship, we sailed a few days later for Apia. Here we were again chartered to proceed to the New Hebrides and Solomon Islands for another cruise.

As we were refitting, I received a letter from Miti-loa, telling me that Vanāki was safe, and would be with us in a few days. When he did arrive, he came with Miti-loa himself in his *taumalua* (native boat) and a score of his people. Vanāki was so well made-up as a Samoan that when he stepped on deck the skipper and I did not recognise him. We sent him below, and told him to keep quiet until we were well under way.

"Ah," said Miti-loa to us, "what a man is he! Such a swimmer was never before seen. My young men have made much of him, and I would he would stay with me."

. . . . . .

Vanāki turned out an acquisition to our ship's company, and soon became a favourite with every one. He was highly delighted when he was placed on the articles at the usual rate of wages paid to native seamen—£3 per month. Our crew were natives from all parts of Polynesia, but English was the language used by them generally to each other. Like all vessels in the labour trade we carried a double crew—one to man the boats when recruiting, and one to work the ship when lying "off and on" at any island where we could not anchor, and Vanāki was greatly pleased when I told him that he should have a place in my boat, instead of being put in the "covering"[1] boat.

We made a splendid run down to the Solomons from Samoa, and when in sight of San Cristoval, spoke a French labour vessel from Nouméa, recruiting for the French New Hebrides Company. Her captain and his "recruiter" (both Englishmen) paid us a visit. They were old acquaintances of our captain and myself, and as they came alongside in their smart whaleboat and Vanāki saw their faces, he gave a weird yell of delight, and rubbed noses with them the moment they stepped on deck.

"Hallo, Vanāki, my lad," said the skipper of *La*

[1] The "covering" boat is that which stands by to open fire if the "landing" boat is attacked.

Metise, shaking his hand, "how are you?" Then turning to us he said: "Vanāki was with me when I was mate with Captain Macleod, in the old *Aurore* of Nouméa. He's a rattling good fellow for a native, and I wish I had him with me now. Wherever did you pick him up?"

We told him, and Houston laughed when I narrated the story of Vanāki's swim.

"Oh, that's nothing for him to do. Why, the beggar once swam from the Banks Group across to the Torres Islands. Has he never told you about it?"

"No. And I would hardly believe him if he did. Why, the two groups are fifty miles apart."

"No, from Tög in the Torres Islands to Ureparapara in the Banks Group is a little over forty miles. But you must wheedle the yarn out of him. He's a bit sensitive of talking about it, on account of his at first being told he was a liar by several people. But Macleod, two traders who were passengers with us, and all the crew of the *Aurore* know the story to be true. We sent an account of it to the Sydney papers."

"I'll get him to tell me some day," I said. "I once heard of a native woman swimming from Nanomaga in the Ellice Group to Nanomea—thirty-five miles—but never believed it for a long time."

After spending half an hour with us, our friends went back to their ship, each having shaken hands warmly with Vanāki, and wished him good luck.

It was some days before the captain and I had time to hear Vanāki's story, which I relate as nearly as possible in his own words.

First of all, however, I must mention that Ureparapara or Bligh Island is a well-wooded, fertile spot, about sixteen miles in circumference, and is an extinct crater. It is now the seat of a successful mission. Tög is much smaller, well-wooded, and inhabited, and about nine hundred feet high. At certain times of the year a strong current sets in a northerly and westerly direction, and it is due to this fact that Vanāki accomplished his swim. Now for his story.

. . . . . .

"I was in the port watch of the *Aurore*. We came to Ureparapara in the month of June to 'recruit' and got four men. Whilst we were there, Captain Houston (who was then mate of the *Aurore*) asked me if I would dive under the ship and look at her copper; for a week before we had touched a reef. So I dived, and found that five sheets of copper were gone from the port side about half a fathom from the keel. So the captain took five new sheets of copper, and punched the nail holes, and gave me one sheet at a time, and I nailed them on securely. In three hours it was done, for the ship was in quiet, clear water, and I knew what to do. The captain then said to me laughingly that he feared I had but tacked on the sheets loosely, and that they would come off. My heart was sore at this, and so I asked Mr. Houston, who is a good diver, to go and look. And he dived and looked, and then five other of the crew—natives—dived and looked, and they all said that the work was well and truly done—all the nails driven home, and the sheets smooth, and without a crinkle. This pleased the captain greatly, and he gave

me a small gold piece, and told me that I could go on shore, and spend it at the white trader's store.

"Now I did a foolish thing. I bought from the trader two bottles of strange grog called *arrak*. It was very strong—stronger than rum—and soon I and two others who drank it became very drunk, and lay on the ground like pigs. Mr. Houston came and found me, and brought me on board, and I was laid on the after-deck under the awning.

"At sunset the ship sailed. I was still asleep, and heard nothing, though in a little while it began to blow, and much rain fell. The captain let me lie on the lee side, so that the rain might beat upon me, and bring me to life again.

"When four bells struck I awoke. I was ashamed. Waiting until the wheel was relieved, I crept along the deck unseen, for it was very dark, and got up on the top of the top-gallant fo'c'stle, and again lay down. The ship was running before the wind under close-reefed sails, and the sea was so great that she pitched heavily every now and then, and much water came over the bows. This did me good, and I soon began to feel able to go below and turn in in my bunk. Then presently, as I was about to rise, the ship made a great plunge, and a mighty sea fell upon her, and I was swept away. No one saw me go, for no one knew that I was there, and the night was very, very dark.

"When I came to the surface, I could see the ship's lights, and cried out, but no one heard me, for the wind and sea made a great noise; and then, too, there was

sweeping rain. In a little while the lights were gone, and I was alone.

"'Now,' I said to myself, 'Vanāki, thou art a fool, and will go into the belly of a shark because of becoming drunk.' And then my heart came back to me, and I swam on easily over the sea, hoping that I would be missed, and the ship heave-to, and send a boat. But I looked in vain.

"By-and-by the sky cleared, and the stars came out, but the wind still blew fiercely, and the seas swept me along so quickly that I knew it would be folly for me to try and face them, and try to swim back to Ureparapara.

"'I will swim to Tög,' I said; 'if the sharks spare me I can do it.' For now that the sky was clear, and I could see the stars my fear died away; and so I turned a little, and swam to the west a little by the north.

"There was a strong current with me, and hour by hour as I swam the wind became less, and the sea died away.

"When daylight came I was not tired, and rested on my back. And as I rested, two green turtle rose near me. They looked at me, and I was glad, for I knew that where turtle were there would be no sharks. I am not afraid of sharks, but what is a man to do with a shark in the open sea without a knife?

"Towards noon there came rain. I lay on my back and put my hollowed hands together, and caught enough to satisfy my great thirst. The rain did not last long.

"A little after noon I saw the land—the island of Tög. It was but three leagues away.

"Then I swam into a great and swift tide-rip, which carried me to the eastward. It was so strong that I feared it would take me away from the island, but soon it turned and swept me to the westward. And then I saw the land becoming nearer and nearer.

"When the sun was nearly touching the sea-rim, I was so close to the south-end of Tög, that I could see the spars of a ship lying at anchor in the bay called Pāo. And then when the sun had set I could see the lights of many canoes catching flying-fish by torchlight.

"I swam on and came to the ship. It was the *Aurore.*

"I clambered up the side-ladder, and stood on deck, and the man who was on anchor watch—an ignorant Tokelau—shouted out in fear, and ran to tell the captain, and Mr. Houston.

"They brought me below and made much of me, and gave me something to drink which made me sleep for many hours.

"When I awakened I was strong and well, but my eyes were *malai* (bloodshot). That is all."

CHAPTER XXIII

TWO PACIFIC ISLANDS BIRDS

The South Sea Corncrake and the Tooth-billed Pigeon

ALTHOUGH I had often heard of the "corncrake" or landrail of the British Isles, I did not see one until a few years ago, on my first visit to Ireland, when a field labourer in County Louth brought me a couple, which he had killed in a field of oats. I looked at them with interest, and at once recognised a striking likeness in shape, markings and plumage to an old acquaintance—the shy and rather rare "banana-bird" of some of the Polynesian and Melanesian Islands. I had frequently when in Ireland heard at night, during the summer months, the repeated and harsh "crake, crake," of many of these birds, issuing from the fields of growing corn, and was very curious to see one, for the unmelodious cry was exactly like that of the *kili vao*, or "banana-bird" of the Pacific Islands. And when I saw the two corncrakes I found them to be practically the same bird, though but half the size of the *kili vao*.

Kili vao in native means bush-snipe, as distinct from *kili fusi*, swamp snipe. It feeds upon ripe bananas, and papaws (mamee apples), and such other sweet fruit, that when over-ripe fall to the ground. It is

very seldom seen in the day-time, when the sun is strong, though its hoarse frog-like note may often be heard in cultivated banana plantations, or on the mountain sides, where the wild banana thrives. At early dawn, or towards sunset, however, they come out from their retreats, and search for fallen bananas, papaws or guavas, and I have spent many a delightful half-hour watching them from my own hiding-place. Although they have such thick, long and clumsy legs, and coarse splay feet they run to and fro with marvelous speed, continually uttering their insistent croak. Usually they were in pairs, male and female, although I once saw a male and three female birds together. The former can easily be recognised, for it is considerably larger than its mate, and the coloration of the plumage on the back and about the eyes is more pronounced, and the beautiful quail-like semi-circular belly markings are more clearly defined. When disturbed, and if unable to run into hiding among the dead banana leaves, they rise and present a ludicrous appearance, for their legs hang down almost straight, and their flight is slow, clumsy and laborious, and seldom extends more than fifty yards.

The natives of the Banks and Santa Cruz Groups (north of the New Hebrides) assert that the *kili* is a ventriloquist, and delights to "fool" any one attempting to capture it. "If you hear it call from the right, it is hiding to the left; and its mate is perhaps only two fathoms away from you, hiding under the fallen banana leaves, and pretending to be dead. And you will never find either, unless it is a dark night, and

you suddenly light a big torch of dried coco-nut leaves; then they become dazed and stupid, and will let you catch them with your hand."

Whilst one cannot accept the ventriloquial theory, there can be no doubt of the extraordinary cunning in hiding, and noiseless speed on foot of these birds when disturbed. One afternoon, near sunset, I was returning from pigeon-shooting on Ureparapara (Banks Group) when in walking along the margin of a taro-swamp, which was surrounded by banana trees, a big *kili* rose right in front of me, and before I could bring my gun to shoulder, my native boy hurled his shoulder-stick at it and brought it down, dead. Then he called to me to be ready for a shot at the mate, which, he said, was close by in hiding.

Walking very gently, he carefully scanned the dead leaves at the foot of the banana trees, and silently pointed to a heap which was soddened by rain.

"It is underneath there," he whispered, then flung himself upon the heap of leaves, and in a few seconds dragged out the prize—a fine full-grown female bird, beautifully marked. I put her in my game-bag. During our two-mile walk to the village she behaved in a disgusting manner, and so befouled herself (after the manner of a young Australian curlew when captured) that she presented a repellent appearance, and had such a disgusting odour that I was at first inclined to throw her—game-bag and all—away. However, my native boy washed her, and then we put her in a native pigeon cage. In the morning she was quite clean and dry, but persistently hid her head when any one ap-

proached, refused to take food and died two days later, although I kept the cage in a dark place.

These birds are excellent eating when not too fat; but when the papaws are ripe they become grossly unwieldy, and the whole body is covered with thick yellow fat, and the flesh has the strong sweet taste of the papaw. At this time, so the natives say, they are actually unable to rise for flight, and are easily captured by the women and children at work in the banana and taro plantations.

(Apropos of this common tendency of the flesh of birds to acquire the taste of their principal article of food, I may mention that in those Melanesian Islands where the small Chili pepper grows wild, the pigeons at certain times of the year feed almost exclusively upon the ripe berries, and their flesh is so pungent as to be almost uneatable. At one place on the littoral of New Britain, there is a patch of country covered with pepper trees, and it is visited by thousands of pigeons, who devour the berries, although their ordinary food of sweet berries was available in profusion in the mountain forests.)

On some of the Melanesian islands there is a variety of the banana-bird which frequents the yam and sweet potato plantation, digs into the hillocks with its powerful feet, and feeds upon the tubers, as does the rare toothed-billed pigeon.

One day, when I was residing in the Caroline Islands, a pair of live birds were brought to me by the natives, who had snared them. They were in beautiful plumage, and I determined to try and keep them.

The natives quickly made me an enclosure about twenty feet square of bamboo slats about an inch or two apart, driving them into the ground, and making a "roof" of the same material, sufficiently high to permit of three young banana trees being planted therein. Then we quickly covered the ground with dead banana leaves, small sticks and other *débris*, and after making it as "natural" as possible, laid down some ripe bananas, and turned the birds into the enclosure. In ten seconds they had disappeared under the heap of leaves as silently as a beaver or a platypus takes to the water.

During the night I listened carefully outside the enclosure, but the captives made neither sound nor appearance. They were still "foxing," or as my Samoan servant called it, *le toga-fiti e mate* (pretending to be dead).

All the following day there was not the slightest movement of the leaves, but an hour after sunset, when I was on my verandah, smoking and chatting with a fellow trader, a native boy came to us, grinning with pleasure, and told us that the birds were feeding. I had a torch of dried coco-nut leaves all in readiness. It was lit, and as the bright flame burst out, and illuminated the enclosure, I felt a thrill of delight—both birds were vigorously feeding upon a very ripe and "squashy" custard apple, disregarding the bananas. The light quite dazed them, and they at once ceased eating, and sat down in a terrified manner, with their necks outstretched, and their bills on the ground. We at once withdrew. In the morning, I was charmed to hear

them "craking," and from that time forward they fed well, and afforded me many a happy hour in watching their antics. I was in great hopes of their breeding, for they had made a great pile of *débris* between the banana trees, into which in the day-time they would always scamper when any one passed, and my natives told me that the end of the rainy season was the incubating period. As it was within a few weeks of that time, I was filled with pleasurable anticipations, and counted the days. Alas, for my hopes! One night, a predatory village pig, smelling the fruit which was always placed in the enclosure daily, rooted a huge hole underneath the bamboos, and in the morning my pets were gone, and nevermore did I hear their hoarse crake! crake!—ever pleasing to me during the night.

THE TOOTH-BILLED PIGEON OF SAMOA—(*DIDUNCULUS STRIGIROSTRIS*)

The recent volcanic outburst on the island of Savai'i in the Samoan Group, after a period of quiescence of about two hundred years, has, so a Californian paper states, revealed the fact that one of the rarest and most interesting birds in the world, and long supposed to be peculiar to the Samoan Islands, and all but extinct, is by no means so in the latter respect, for the convulsion in the centre of the island, where the volcanic mountain stands nearly 4,000 feet high, has driven quite a number of the birds to the littoral of the south coast. So at least it was reported to the San Francisco journal by a white trader residing on the south side of Savai'i during the outbreak.

For quite a week before the first tremors and groanings of the mountain were felt and heard, the natives said that they had seen *Manu Mea* (tooth-billed pigeons) making their way down to the coast. Several were killed and eaten by children.

Before entering into my own experiences and knowledge of this extraordinary bird, gained during a seven years' residence in Samoa, principally on the island of Upolu, I cannot do better than quote from Dr. Stair's book, *Old Samoa*, his description of the bird. Very happily, his work was sent to me some years ago, and I was delighted to find in it an account of the *Manu Mea* (red bird) and its habits. In some respects he was misinformed, notably in that in which he was told that the *Didunculus* was peculiar to the Samoan Islands; for the bird certainly is known in some of the Solomon Islands, and also in the Admiralty Group—two thousand miles to the north-west of Samoa. Here, however, is what Dr. Stair remarks:—

"One of the curiosities of Samoan natural history is *Le Manu Mea*, or red bird of the natives, the tooth-billed pigeon (*Didunculus Strigirostris*, Peale), and is peculiar to the Samoan Islands. This remarkable bird, so long a puzzle to the scientific world, is only found in Samoa, and even there it has become so scarce that it is rapidly becoming extinct, as it falls an easy prey to the numerous wild cats ranging the forests. It was first described and made known to the scientific world by Sir William Jardine, in 1845, under the name of *Gnathodon Strigirostris*, from a specimen purchased by Lady Hervey in Edinburgh, amongst a number of Australian

skins. Its appearance excited great interest and curiosity, but its true habitat was unknown until some time after, when it was announced by Mr. Strickland before the British Association at York, that Mr. Titian Peale, of the United States Exploring Expedition, had discovered a new bird allied to the dodo, which he proposed to name *Didunculus Strigirostris*. From the specimen in Sir William Jardine's possession the bird was figured by Mr. Gould in his *Birds of Australia*, and its distinctive characteristics shown; but nothing was known of its habitat. At that time the only specimens known to exist out of Samoa were the two in the United States, taken there by Commodore Wilkes, and the one in the collection of Sir William Jardine, in Edinburgh. The history of this last bird is singular, and may be alluded to here.

"To residents in Samoa the *Manu Mea*, or red bird, was well known by repute, but as far as I know, no specimen had ever been obtained by any resident on the islands until the year 1843, when two fine birds, male and female, were brought to me by a native who had captured them on the nest. I was delighted with my prize, and kept them carefully, but could get no information whatever as to what class they belonged. After a time one was unfortunately killed, and not being able to gain any knowledge respecting the bird, I sent the surviving one to Sydney, by a friend, in 1843, hoping it would be recognised and described; but nothing was known of it there, and my friend left it with a bird dealer in Sydney, and returned to report his want of success. It died in Sydney, and the skin was subsequently sent

to England with other skins for sale, including the skin of an Apteryx, from Samoa. Later on the skin of the *Manu Mea* was purchased by Lady Hervey, and subsequently it came into the possession of Sir William Jardine, by whom it was described. Still nothing was known of its habitat—but this bird which I had originally sent to Sydney from Samoa was the means of bringing it under the notice of the scientific world, and thus in some indirect manner of obtaining the object I had in view.

"After my return to England, in 1846, the late Dr. Gray, of the British Museum, showed me a drawing of the bird, which I at once recognised; as also a drawing of a species of Apteryx which had been purchased in the same lot of skins. A native of Samoa, who was with me, at once recognised both birds. Dr. Gray and Mr. Mitchell (of the Zoological Gardens in London) were much interested in the descriptions I gave them, and urged that strong efforts should be made to procure living specimens. But no steps were taken to obtain the bird until fourteen years after, when, having returned to Australia, I was surprised to see a notice in the *Melbourne Argus*, of August 3, 1862, to the effect that the then Governor of Victoria, Sir Henry Barkley, had received a communication from the Zoological Society, London, soliciting his co-operation in endeavouring to ascertain further particulars as to the habitat of a bird they were desirous of obtaining; forwarding drawings and particulars as far as known at the same time; offering a large sum for living specimens or skins delivered in London. I at once recognised that the bird

sought after was the *Manu Mea*, and gave the desired information and addresses of friends in Samoa, through whose instrumentality a living specimen was safely received in London, *via* Sydney, on April 10, 1864, the Secretary of the Zoological Society subsequently writing to Dr. Bennett of Sydney, saying, 'The *La Hogue* arrived on April 10, and I am delighted to be able to tell you that the *Didunculus* is now alive, and in good health in the gardens, and Mr. Bartlett assures me is likely to do well'.

"In appearance the bird may be described as about the size of a large wood-pigeon, with similar legs and feet, but the form of its body more nearly resembles that of the partridge. The remarkable feature of the bird is that whilst its legs are those of a pigeon, the beak is that of the parrot family, the upper mandible being hooked like the parrot's, the under one being deeply serrated; hence the name, tooth-billed pigeon. This peculiar formation of the beak very materially assists the bird in feeding on the potato-loke root, or rather fruit, of the *soi*, or wild yam, of which it is fond. The bird holds the tuber firmly with its feet, and then rasps it upwards with its parrot-like beak, the lower mandible of which is deeply grooved. It is a very shy bird, being seldom found except in the retired parts of the forest, away from the coast settlements. It has great power of wing, and when flying makes a noise, which, as heard in the distance, closely resembles distant thunder, for which I have on several occasions mistaken it. It both roosts and feeds on the ground, as also on stumps or low bushes, and hence becomes an

easy prey to the wild cats of the forest. These birds also build their nests on low bushes or stumps, and are thus easily captured. During the breeding season the male and female relieve each other with great regularity, and guard their nests so carefully that they fall an easy prey to the fowler; as in the case of one bird being taken its companion is sure to be found there shortly after. They were also captured with birdlime, or shot with arrows, the fowler concealing himself near an open space, on which some *soi*, their favourite food, had been scattered.

"The plumage of the bird may be thus described. The head, neck, breast, and upper part of the back is of greenish black. The back, wings, tail, and under tail coverts of a chocolate red. The legs and feet are of bright scarlet; the mandibles, orange red, shaded off near the tips with bright yellow."

. . . . . .

Less than twenty years ago I was residing on the eastern end of Upolu (Samoa), and during my shooting excursions on the range of mountains that traverses the island from east to west, saw several *Didunculi*, and, I regret to say, shot two. For I had no ornithological knowledge whatever, and although I knew that the Samoans regarded the *Manu Mea* as a rare bird, I had no idea that European savants and museums would be glad to obtain even a stuffed specimen. The late Earl of Pembroke, to whom I wrote on the subject from Australia, strongly urged me to endeavour to secure at least one living specimen; so also did Sir George Grey. But although I—like Mr. Stair—wrote to many native

friends in Samoa, offering a high price for a bird, I had no success; civil war had broken out, and the people had other matters to think of beside bird-catching. I was, however, told a year later that two fine specimens had been taken on the north-west coast of Upolu, that one had been so injured in trapping that it died, and the other was liberated by a mischievous child.

I have never heard one of these birds sound a note, but a native teacher on Tutuila told me that in the mating season they utter a short, husky hoot, more like a cough than the cry of a bird.

A full month after I first landed in Samoa, I was shooting in the mountains at the back of the village of Tiavea in Upolu, when a large, and to me unknown, bird rose from the leaf-strewn ground quite near me, making almost as much noise in its flight as a hornbill. A native who was with me, fired at the same time as I did, and the bird fell. Scarcely had the native stooped to pick it up, exclaiming that it was a *Manu Mea*, when a second appeared, half-running, half-flying along the ground. This, alas! I also killed. They were male and female, and my companion and I made a search of an hour to discover their resting place (it was not the breeding season), but the native said that the *Manu Mea* scooped out a retreat in a rotten tree or among loose stones, covered with dry moss. But we searched in vain, nor did we even see any wild yams growing about, so evidently the pair were some distance from their home, or were making a journey in search of food.

During one of my trips on foot across Upolu, with a party of natives, we sat down to rest on the side of a

steep mountain path leading to the village of Siumu. Some hundreds of feet below us was a comparatively open patch of ground—an abandoned yam plantation, and just as we were about to resume our journey, we saw two *Manu Mea* appear. Keeping perfectly quiet, we watched them moving about, scratching up the leaves, and picking at the ground in an aimless, perfunctory sort of manner with their heavy, thick bills. The natives told me that they were searching, not for yams, but for a sweet berry called *masa'oi*, upon which the wild pigeons feed.

In a few minutes the birds must have become aware of our presence, for they suddenly vanished.

I have always regretted in connection with the two birds I shot, that not only was I unaware of their value, even when dead, but that there was then living in Apia a Dr. Forbes, medical officer to the staff of the German factory. Had I sent them to him, he could have cured the skins at least, for he was, I believe, an ardent naturalist.

CHAPTER XXIV

A NIGHT RUN ACROSS FĀGALOA BAY

WHEN I was supercargo of the brig *Palestine*, we were one day beating along the eastern shore of the great island of Tombara (New Ireland) or, as it is now called by its German possessors, Neu Mecklenburg, when an accident happened to one of our hands—a smart young A.B. named Rogers. The brig was "going about" in a stiff squall, when the jib-sheet block caught poor Rogers in the side, and broke three of his ribs.

There were then no white men living on the east coast of New Ireland, or we should have landed him there to recover, and picked him up again on our return from the Caroline Islands, so we decided to run down to Gerrit Denys Island, where we had heard there was a German doctor living. He was a naturalist, and had been established there for over a year, although the natives were as savage and warlike a lot as could be found anywhere in Melanesia.

We reached the island, anchored, and the naturalist came on board. He was not a professional-looking man. Here is my description of him, written fifteen years ago :—

"He was bootless, and his pants and many-pocketed jumper of coarse dungaree were exceedingly dirty, and looked as if they had been cut out with a knife and fork instead of scissors, they were so marvellously ill-fitting. His head-gear was an ancient Panama hat, which flopped about, and almost concealed his red-bearded face, as if trying to apologise for the rest of his apparel; and the thin gold-rimmed spectacles he wore made a curious contrast to his bare and sun-burnt feet, which were as brown as those of a native. His manner, however, was that of a man perfectly at ease with himself and his clear, steely blue eyes, showed an infinite courage and resolution."

At first he was very reluctant to have Rogers brought on shore, but finally yielded, being at heart a good-natured man. So we bade Rogers good-bye, made the doctor a present of some provisions, and a few cases of beer, and told him we should be back in six weeks.

When we returned, Rogers came on board with the German. He was quite recovered, and he and his host were evidently on very friendly terms, and bade farewell to each other with some show of feeling.

After we had left the island, Rogers came aft, and told us his experiences with the German doctor.

"He's a right good sort of a chap, and treated me well, and did all he could for me, sirs—but although he is a nice cove, I'm glad to get away from him, and be aboard the brig again. For I can hardly believe that I haven't had a horrid, blarsted nightmare for the past six weeks."

And then he shuddered.

"What was wrong with him, Rogers?" asked the skipper.

"Why, he ain't no naturalist—I mean like them butterfly-hunting coves like you see in the East Indies. He's a head-hunter—buys heads—fresh 'uns by preference, an' smokes an' cures 'em hisself, and sells 'em to the museums in Europe. So help me God, sirs, I've seen him put fresh human heads into a barrel of pickle, then he takes 'em out after a week or so, and cleans out the brains, and smokes the heads, and sorter varnishes and embalms 'em like. An' when he wasn't a picklin' or embalmin' or varnishin', he was a-writing in half a dozen log books. I never knew what he was a-doin' until one day I went into his workshop—as he called it—and saw him bargaining with some niggers for a fresh cut-off head, which he said was not worth much because the skull was badly fractured, and would not set up well.

"He was pretty mad with me at first for comin' in upon him, and surprisin' him like, but after a while he took me into his confidence, and said as how he was engaged in a perfeckly legitimate business, and as the heads was dead he was not hurtin' 'em by preparing 'em for museums and scientific purposes. And he says to me, 'You English peoples have got many peautiful preserved heads of the New Zealand Maories in your museums, but ach, Gott, there is not in England such peautiful heads as I haf mineself brebared here on dis islandt. And already I haf send me away fifty-seven, and in two months I shall haf brebared sixteen more, for which I shall get me five hundred marks each.'"

Rogers told us that when he one day expressed his horror at his host's "business," the German retorted that it was only forty or fifty years since that many English officials in the Australian colonies did a remarkably good business in buying smoked Maori heads, and selling them to the Continental museums. (This was true enough.) Rogers furthermore told us that the doctor "cured" his heads in a smoke-box, and had "a regular chemist's shop" in which were a number of large bottles of pyroligneous acid, prepared by a London firm.

This distinguished savant left Gerrit Denys Island about a year later in a schooner bound for Singapore. She was found floating bottom up off the Admiralty Group, and a Hong-Kong newspaper, in recording the event, mentioned that "the unfortunate gentleman (Dr. Ludwig S——) had with him an interesting and extremely valuable ethnographical collection".

Rogers's horrible story had a great interest for me; for it had been my lot to see many human heads just severed from the body, and I was always fascinated by the peculiar expression of the features of those unfortunates who had been decapitated suddenly by one swift blow. "Death," "Peace," "Immortality," say the closed eyelids and the calm, quiet lips to the beholder.

. . . . . .

I little imagined that within two years I should have a rather similar experience to that of Rogers, though in my case it was a very brief one. Yet it was all too long for me, and I shall always remember it as the weirdest experience of my life.

I have elsewhere in this volume spoken of the affectionate regard I have always had for the Samoan people, with whom I passed some of the happiest years of my life. I have lived among them in peace and in war, have witnessed many chivalrous and heroic deeds, and yet have seen acts of the most terrible cruelty to the living, the mutilation and dishonouring of the dead killed in combat, and other deeds that filled me with horror and repulsion. And yet the perpetrators were all professing Christians—either Protestant or Roman Catholic—and would no more think of omitting daily morning and evening prayer, and attending service in church or chapel every Sunday, than they would their daily bathe in sea or river.

Always shall I remember one incident that occurred during the civil war between King Malietoa and his rebel subjects at the town of Saluafata. The *olo*, or trenches, of the king's troops had been carried by the rebels, among whom was a young warrior who had often distinguished himself by his reckless bravery. At the time of the assault I was in the rebel lines, for I was on very friendly terms with both sides, and each knew that I would not betray the secrets of the other, and that my only object was to render aid to the wounded.

This young man, Tolu, told me, before joining in the assault, that he had a brother, a cousin, and an uncle in the enemy's trenches, and that he trusted he should not meet any one of them, for he feared that he might turn *pala'ai* (coward) and not "do his duty". He was a Roman Catholic, and had been educated by the Marist

Brothers, but all his relatives, with the exception of one sister, were Protestants—members of the Church established by the London Missionary Society.

An American trader named Parter and I watched the assault, and saw the place carried by the rebels, and went in after them. Among the dead was Tolu, and we were told that he had shot himself in grief at having cut down his brother, whom he did not recognise.

Now as to my own weird experience.

There had been severe fighting in the Fāgaloa district of the Island of Upolu, and many villages were in flames when I left the Port of Tiavea in my boat for Fāgaloa Bay, a few miles along the shore. I was then engaged in making a trip along the north coast, visiting almost every village, and making arrangements for the purchase of the coming crop of copra (dried coco-nut). I was everywhere well received by both Malietoa's people and the rebels, but did but little business. The natives were too occupied in fighting to devote much time to husking and drying coco-nuts, except when they wanted to get money to buy arms and ammunition.

My boat's crew consisted of four natives of Savage Island (Niué), many of whom are settled in Samoa, where they have ample employment as boatmen and seamen. They did not at all relish the sound of bullets whizzing over the boat, as we sometimes could not help crossing the line of fire, and they had a horror of travelling at night-time, imploring me not to run the risk of being slaughtered by a volley from the shore—

as how could the natives know in the darkness that we were not enemies.

Fāgaloa Bay is deep, narrow and very beautiful. Small villages a few miles apart may be seen standing in the midst of groves of coco-nut palms, and orange, banana and bread-fruit trees, and everywhere bright mountain streams of crystal water debouch into the lovely bay.

On Sunday afternoon I sailed into the bay and landed at the village of Samamea on the east side, intending to remain for the night. We found the people plunged in grief—a party of rebels had surprised a village two miles inland, and ruthlessly slaughtered all the inhabitants as well as a party of nearly a score of visitors from the town of Salimu, on the west side of the bay. So sudden was the onslaught of the rebels that no one in the doomed village escaped except a boy of ten years of age. After being decapitated, the bodies of the victims were thrown into the houses, and the village set on fire.

The people of Samamea hurriedly set out to pursue the raiding rebels, and an engagement ensued, in which the latter were badly beaten, and fled so hurriedly that they had to abandon all the heads they had taken the previous day in order to save their own.

The chief of Samamea, in whose house I had my supper, gave me many details of the fighting, and then afterwards asked me if I would come and look at the heads that had been recovered from the enemy. They were in the "town house" and were covered over with sheets of navy blue cloth, or matting. A number of

natives were seated round the house, conversing in whispers, or weeping silently.

"These," said the chief to me, pointing to a number of heads placed apart from the others, "are the heads of the Salimu people—seventeen in all, men, women and three children. We have sent word to Salimu to the relatives to come for them. I cannot send them myself, for no men can be spared, and we have our own dead to attend to as well, and may ourselves be attacked at any time."

A few hours later messengers arrived from Salimu. They had walked along the shore, for the bay was very rough—it had been blowing hard for two days—and, the wind being right ahead, they would not launch a canoe—it would only have been swamped.

Taken to see the heads of their relatives and friends, the messengers gave way to most uncontrollable grief, and their cries were so distressing that I went for a walk on the beach—to be out of hearing.

When I returned to the village I found the visitors from Salimu and the chief of Samamea awaiting to interview me. The chief, acting as their spokeman, asked me if I would lend them my boat to take the heads of their people to Salimu. He had not a single canoe he could spare, except very small ones, which would be useless in such weather, whereas my whaleboat would make nothing of it.

I could not refuse their request—it would have been ungracious of me, and it only meant a half-hour's run across the bay, for Salimu was exactly abreast of Samamea. So I said I would gladly sail

them over in my boat at sunset, when I should be ready.

The heads were placed in baskets, and reverently carried down to the beach, and placed in the boat, and with our lug-sail close reefed we pushed off just after dark.

There were nine persons in the boat—the four Salimu people, my crew of four and myself. The night was starlight and rather cold, for every now and then a chilly rain squall would sweep down from the mountains.

As we spun along before the breeze no one spoke, except in low tones. Our dreadful cargo was amidships, each basket being covered from view, but every now and then the boat would ship some water, and when I told one of my men to bale out, he did so with shuddering horror, for the water was much blood-stained.

When we were more than half-way across, and could see the lights and fires of Salimu, a rain squall overtook us, and at the same moment the boat struck some floating object with a crash, and then slid over it, and as it passed astern I saw what was either a log or plank about twenty feet long.

"Boat is stove in, for'ard!" cried one of my men, and indeed that was very evident, for the water was pouring in—she had carried away her stem, and started all the forward timber ends.

To have attempted to stop the inrush of water effectually would have been waste of time, but I called to my men to come aft as far as they could, so as to let the boat's head lift; and whilst two of them kept on baling, the others shook out the reef in our lug, and the boat

went along at a great speed, half full of water as she was, and down by the stern. The water still rushed in, and I told the Samoans to move the baskets of heads farther aft, so that the men could bale out quicker.

"We'll be all right in ten minutes, boys," I cried to my men, as I steered; "I'll run her slap up on the beach by the church."

Presently one of the Samoans touched my arm, and said in a whisper that we were surrounded by a swarm of sharks. He had noticed them, he said, before the boat struck.

"They smell the bloodied water," he muttered.

A glance over the side filled me with terror. There were literally scores of sharks, racing along on both sides of the boat, some almost on the surface, others some feet down, and the phosphorescence of the water added to the horror of the scene. At first I was in hopes that they were harmless porpoises, but they were so close that some of them could have been touched with one's hand. Most fortunately I was steering with a rudder, and not a steer oar. The latter would have been torn out of my hands by the brutes—the boat have broached-to and we all have met with a horrible death. Presently one of the weeping women noticed them, and uttered a scream of terror.

"*Le malie, le malie!*" ("The sharks, the sharks!") she cried.

My crew then became terribly frightened, and urged me to let them throw the baskets of heads overboard, but the Samoans became frantic at the suggestion, all of them weeping.

So we kept on, the boat making good progress, although we could only keep her afloat by continuous baling of the ensanguined water. In five minutes more my heart leapt with joy—we were in shallow water, only a cable length from Salimu beach, and then in another blinding rain squall we ran on shore, and our broken bows ploughed into the sand, amid the cries of some hundreds of natives, many of whom held lighted torches.

All of us in the boat were so overwrought that for some minutes we were unable to speak, and it took a full bottle of brandy to steady the nerves of my crew and myself. I shall never forget that night run across Fāgaloa Bay.

CHAPTER XXV

A BIT OF GOOD LUCK

BETWEEN the southern end of the great island of New Guinea and the Solomon Group there is a cluster of islands marked on the chart as "Woodlark Islands," but the native name is Mayu. Practically they were not discovered until 1836, when the master of the Sydney sandal-wooding barque *Woodlark* made a survey of the group. The southern part of the cluster consists of a number of small well-wooded islands, all inhabited by a race of Papuans, who, said Captain Grimes of the *Woodlark*, had certainly never before seen a white man, although they had long years before seen ships in the far distance.

It was on these islands that I met with the most profitable bit of trading that ever befel me during more than a quarter of a century's experience in the South Seas.

Nearly thirty years passed since Grimes's visit without the natives seeing more than half a dozen ships. These were American or Hobart Town whalers, and none of them came to an anchor—they laid off and on, and bartered with the natives for fresh provisions, but from

the many inquiries I made, I am sure that no one from these ships put foot on shore; for the inhabitants were not to be trusted, being warlike, savage and treacherous.

The master of one of these ships was told by the natives—or rather made to understand, for no one of them knew a word of English—that about twelve months previously a large vessel had run on shore one wild night on the south side of the group and that all on board had perished. Fourteen bodies had been washed on shore at a little island named Elaue, all dreadfully battered about, and the ship herself had disappeared and nothing remained of her but pieces of wreckage. She had evidently struck on the reef near Elaue with tremendous violence, then slipped off and sunk. The natives asked the captain to come on shore and be shown the spot where the men had been buried, but he was too cautious a man to trust himself among them.

On his reporting the matter to the colonial shipping authorities at Sydney, he learned that two vessels were missing—one a Dutch barque of seven hundred tons which left Sydney for Dutch New Guinea, and the other a full-rigged English ship bound to Shanghai. No tidings had been heard of them for over eighteen months, and it was concluded that the vessel lost on Woodlark Island was one or the other, as that island lay in the course both would have taken.

In 1868-69 there was a great outburst of trading operations in the North-West Pacific Islands—then in most instances a *terra incognita*, and there was a keen rivalry between the English and German trading firms

to get a footing on such new islands as promised them a lucrative return for their ventures. Scores of adventurous white men lost their lives in a few months, some by the deadly malarial fever, others by the treacherous and cannibalistic savages. But others quickly took their places—nothing daunted—for the coco-nut oil trade, the then staple industry of the North-West Pacific, was very profitable and men made fortunes rapidly. What mattered it if every returning ship brought news of some bloody tragedy—such and such a brig or schooner having been cut off and all hands murdered, cooked and eaten, the vessel plundered and then burnt? Such things occur in the North-West Pacific in the present times, but the outside world now hears of them through the press and also of the punitive expeditions by war-ships of England, France or Germany.

Then in those old days we traders would merely say to one another that "So-and-So 'had gone'". He and his ship's company had been cut off at such-and-such a place, and the matter, in the eager rush for wealth, would be forgotten.

At that time I was in Levuka—the old capital of Fiji—supercargo of a little topsail schooner of seventy-five tons. She was owned and sailed by a man named White, an extremely adventurous and daring fellow, though very quiet—almost solemn—in his manner.

We had been trading among the windward islands of the Fiji Group for six months and had not done at all well. White was greatly dissatisfied and wanted to break new ground. Every few weeks a vessel would

sail into the little port of Levuka with a valuable cargo of coco-nut oil in casks, dunnaged with ivory-nuts, the latter worth in those days £40 a ton. And both oil and ivory-nuts had been secured from the wild savages of the North-West in exchange for rubbishy hoop-iron knives, old "Tower" muskets with ball and cheap powder, common beads and other worthless articles on which there was a profit of thousands per cent. (In fact, I well remember one instance in which the master of the Sydney brig *E. K. Bateson*, after four months' absence, returned with a cargo which was sold for £5,000. His expenses (including the value of the trade goods he had bartered) his crew's wages, provisions, and the wear and tear of the ship's gear, came to under £400.)

White, who was a very wide-awake energetic man, despite his solemnity, one day came on board and told me that he had made up his mind to join in the rush to the islands to the North-West between New Guinea and the Solomons.

"I have," he said, "just been talking to the skipper of that French missionary brig, the *Anonyme*. He has just come back from the North-West, and told me that he had landed a French priest[1] at Mayu (Woodlark Island). He—the priest—remained on shore some days to establish a mission, and told Rabalau, the skipper of the brig, that the natives were very friendly and said that they would be glad to have a resident missionary, but that they wanted a trader still more. Furthermore,

[1] This was Monseigneur d'Anthipelles the head of the Marist Brothers in Oceania.

they have been making oil for over a year in expectation of a ship coming, but none had come. And Rabalau says that they have over a hundred tuns of oil, and can't make any more as they have nothing to put it in. Some of it is in old canoes, some in thousands of big bamboos, and some in hollowed-out trees. And they have whips of ivory nuts and are just dying to get muskets, tobacco and beads. And not a soul in Levuka except Rabalau and I know it. You see, I lent him twenty bolts of canvas and a lot of running gear last year, and now he wants to do me a good turn. Now, I say that Woodlark is the place for us. Anyway, I've bought all the oil casks I could get, and a lot more in shooks, and so let us bustle and get ready to be out of this unholy Levuka at daylight."

. . . . . .

We did "bustle". In twenty-four hours we were clear of Levuka reef and spinning along to the W.N.W. before the strong south-east trade, for our run of 1,600 miles. Day and night the little schooner raced over the seas at a great rate, and we made the passage in seven days, dropping anchor off the largest village in the island—Guasap.

In ten minutes our decks were literally packed with excited natives, all armed, but friendly. Had they chosen to kill us and seize the schooner, it would have been an easy task, for we numbered only eight persons —captain, mate, bos'un, four native seamen, and myself.

We learned from the natives that two months previously there had been a terrible hurricane which lasted

for three days and devastated two-thirds of the islands. Thousands of coco-nut trees had been blown down, and the sea had swept away many villages on the coast. So violent was the surf that the wreck of the sunken ship on Elaue Island had been cast up in fragments on the reef, and the natives had secured a quantity of iron work, copper, and Muntz metal bolts. These articles I at once bargained for, after I had seen the collection, and for two old Tower muskets, value five shillings each, obtained the lot—worth £250.

I had arranged with the chief and his head men to buy their oil in the morning. And White and I found it hard to keep our countenances when they joyfully accepted to fill every cask we had on the ship each for twenty sticks of twist tobacco, a cupful of fine red beads and a fathom of red Turkey twill! Or for five casks I would give a musket, a tin of powder, twenty bullets, and twenty caps!

In ten minutes I had secured eighty tuns of oil (worth £30 a tun) for trade goods that cost White less than £20. And the beauty of it was that the natives were so impressed by the liberality of my terms that they said they would supply the ship with all the fresh provisions—pigs, fowls, turtle and vegetables that I asked for, without payment.

As White and I, after our palaver with the head men, were about to return on board, we noticed two children who were wearing a number of silver coins, strung on cinnet (coir) fibre, around their necks. We called them to us, looked at the coins and found that they were rupees and English five-shilling pieces.

I asked one of our Fijian seamen, who acted as interpreter, to ask the children from where they got the coins.

"On the reef," they replied, "there are thousands of them cast up with the wreckage of the ship that sank a long time ago. Most of them are like these"—showing a five-shilling piece; "but there are much more smaller ones like these,"—showing a rupee.

"Are there any *sama sama* (yellow) ones?" I asked.

No, they said, they had not found any *sama sama* ones. But they could bring me basketfuls of those like which they showed me.

White's usually solemn eyes were now gleaming with excitement. I drew him and the Fiji man aside, and said to the latter quietly:—

"Sam, don't let these people think that these coins are of any more value than the copper bolts. Tell them that for every one hundred pieces they bring on board —no matter what size they may be—I will give them a cupful of fine red beads—full measure. Or, if they do not care for beads, I will give two sticks of tobacco, or a six-inch butcher knife of good, hard steel."

(The three last words made White smile—and whisper to me, "'A good, hard steal' some people would say—but not me".)

"And Sam," I went on, "you shall have an *alofa* (present) of two hundred dollars if you manage this carefully, and don't let these people think that we particularly care about these pieces of soft white metal. We came to Mayu for oil—understand?"

Sam did understand: and in a few minutes every boy and girl in Guasap were out on the reef picking up

the money. That day they brought us over £200 in English and Indian silver, together with about £12 in Dutch coins. (From this latter circumstance White and I concluded that the wrecked vessel was the missing Dutch barque.)

On the following morning the reef at low tide presented an extraordinary spectacle. Every woman, boy and girl from Guasap and the adjacent villages were searching for the coins, and their clamour was terrific. Whilst all this was going on, White, and the mate, and crew were receiving the oil from the shore, putting it into our casks, driving the hoops, and stowing them in the hold, working in such a state of suppressed excitement that we were unable to exchange a word with each other, for as each cask was filled I, on the after-deck, paid for it, shunted off the seller, and took another one in hand.

At four o'clock in the afternoon we ceased work on board and went on shore to "buy money".

The village square was crowded with women and children, every one of whom had money—mostly in English five-shilling pieces. Some of these coins were bent and twisted into the most curious shape, some were imbedded in lumps of coral, and nearly all gave evidence of the terrific fury of the seas which had cast them up upon the reef from a depth of seven fathoms of water. Many were merely round lumps, having been rolled over and over among the sand and coral. These I demurred to accepting on the terms agreed upon for undamaged coins, and the natives cheerfully agreed to my decision.

That day we bought silver coin, damaged and undamaged, to the value of £350, for trade goods worth about £17 or £18.

And for the following two weeks, whilst White and our crew were hammering and coopering away at the oil casks, and stowing them under hatches, I was paying out the trade goods for the oil, and "buying money".

We remained at Mayu for a month, until there was no more money to be found—except a few coins (or rather what had once been coins); and then with a ship full of oil, and with £2,100 worth of money, we left and sailed for Sydney.

White sold the money *en bloc* to the Sydney mint for £1,850. The oil realised £2,400, and the copper, etc., £250. My share came to over £400—exclusive of four months' wages—making nearly £500. This was the best bit of trading luck that I ever met with.

I must add that even up to 1895 silver coins from the Dutch barque were still being found by the natives of Woodlark Islands.

CHAPTER XXVI

MODERN PIRATES

PIRACY, as most people are aware, is not yet quite extinct in Chinese and East Indian waters, despite the efforts that have been made to utterly stamp it out. But it is not generally known that along the shores of Dutch New Guinea, on both sides of the great island, there are still vigorous communities of native pirates, who will not hesitate to attack even armed trading vessels. These savages combine the business of head-hunting with piracy, and although they do not possess modern firearms, and their crafts are simply huge canoes, they show the most determined courage, even when attacking a vessel manned by Europeans.

The annual reports of the Governors of Dutch, German and British New Guinea, detailing the murderous doings of these head-hunting pirates, are as interesting reading as the tales of Rajah Brooke and Stamford Raffles, and the practical suppression of piracy in the East Indian Archipelago, but seldom attract more than a few lines of comment in the public press.

In writing of pirates of the present day, I shall not

go beyond my own beat of the North and South Pacific, and speak only of events within my own personal knowledge and observation. Before entering into an account of some of the doings of the New Guinea "Tugeri," or head-hunter pirates, I shall tell the story of two notable acts of piracy committed by white men in the South Pacific, less than ten years ago. The English newspapers gave some attention to one case, for the two principal criminals concerned were tried at Brest, and the case was known as the "Rorique tragedy". Much comment was made on the statement that the King of the Belgians went to France, after the prisoners had been sentenced to death (they were Belgian), to personally intercede for them. The French press stigmatised His Majesty's action as a scandal (one journal suggesting that perhaps the pirates were pretty women in men's garb); but no doubt King Leopold is a very tender-hearted man, despite the remarks of unkind English people on the subject of the eccentricities of the Belgian officers in the Congo Free State—such as cutting off the hands of a few thousands of stupid negroes who failed to bring in sufficient rubber. There are even people who openly state that the Sultan of Turkey dislikes Armenians, and has caused some of them to be hurt.

But I am getting away from my subject.

The story of the Roriques, and the tragedy of the *Niuroahiti*, which was the name of the vessel they seized, is one of the many grisly episodes with which the history of the South Seas is so prolific. Briefly it is as follows:—

About the end of 1891 the two brothers arrived at Papeite, the capital of Tahiti, from the Paumotu Group, where, it was subsequently learned, they had been put on shore by the captain of an island trader, who strongly suspected them of plotting with the crew to murder him and seize the ship. Nothing of this incident, however, was known at Tahiti among the white residents with whom they soon ingratiated themselves; they were exceedingly agreeable-mannered men, and the elder brother, who was a remarkably handsome man of about thirty-five, was an excellent linguist, speaking German, French, Italian, English, Dutch, Spanish and Zulu fluently. Although they had with them no property beyond firearms, their *bonhomie* and the generally accepted belief that they were men of means, made them the recipients of much hospitality and kindness. Eventually the younger man was given a position as a trader on one of the pearl-shell lagoon islands in the Paumotu Group, while the other took the berth of mate in the schooner *Niuroahiti*, a smart little native-built vessel owned by a Tahitian prince. The schooner was under the command of a half-caste, and her complement consisted, besides the captain, of Mr. William Gibson, the supercargo, Rorique the first mate, a second mate, four Society Island natives, and the cook, a Frenchman named Hippolyte Miret. The *Niuroahiti* traded between Tahiti and the Paumotus, and when she sailed on her last voyage she was bound to the Island of Kaukura, where the younger Rorique was stationed as trader. She never returned, but it was ascertained that she had called at Kaukura,

and then left again with the second brother Rorique as passenger.

Long, long months passed, and the Australian relatives and friends of young Gibson, a cheery, adventurous young fellow, began to think, with the owner of the *Niuroahiti*, that she had met a fate common enough in the South Sea trade—turned turtle in a squall, and gone to the bottom with all hands.

About this time I was on a trading cruise in the Caroline Islands, and one day we spoke a Fiji schooner. I went on board for a chat with the skipper, and told him of the *Niuroahiti* affair, of which I had heard a month before.

"By Jove," he exclaimed, "I met a schooner exactly like her about ten days ago. She was going to the W.N.W.—Ponapé way—and showed French colours. I bore up to speak her, but she evidently didn't want it, hoisted her squaresail and stood away."

From this I was sure that the vessel was the *Niuroahiti*, and therefore sent a letter to the Spanish governor at Ponapé, relating the affair. It reached him just in time.

The *Niuroahiti* was then lying in Jakoits harbour in Ponapé, and was to sail on the following day for Macao. She was promptly seized, and the brothers Rorique put in irons, and taken on board the Spanish cruiser *Le Gaspi* for conveyance to Manila. Hippolyte Miret, the cook, confessed to the Spanish authorities that the brothers Rorique had shot dead in their sleep the captain, Mr. Gibson, the second mate, and the four native sailors.

The trial was a long one, but the evidence was most damning and convincing, although the brothers passionately declared that Miret's story was a pure invention. Sentence of death was passed, but was afterwards commuted to imprisonment for life, and the Roriques are now in chains in Cayenne.

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The second case was of a very dreadful character, and has an additional interest from the fact that out of all the participators—the pirates and their victims—only one was left alive to tell the tale, and he was found in a dying condition on one of the Galapagos Islands, and only lived a few days. The story was told to me by the captain of the brigantine *Isaac Revels*, of San Francisco, who put into the Galapagos to repair his ship, which had started a butt-end and was leaking seriously. He had just anchored between Narborough and Albemarle Islands when he saw a man sitting on the shore, and waving his hands to the ship. A boat was lowered, and the man brought on board. He was in a ravenous state of hunger, and half-demented; but after he had been carefully attended to he was able to give some account of himself. He was a young Colombian Indian, could speak no English, and only a mongrel, halting kind of Spanish. The Portuguese cook of the *Isaac Revels*, however, understood him. This was his story:—

He was one of the peons of a wealthy Ecuadorian gentleman, who with another equally rich friend sailed from Guayaquil for the Galapagos Islands (which belong to Ecuador), and the largest of which, Albemarle Island,

they had leased from that Government for sheep and cattle-breeding. They took with them a few thousand silver dollars, which the peon saw placed in "an iron box" (safe).

One of the merchants had with him his two young daughters. The vessel was a small brig, and the captain and crew mostly Chilenos. One night, when the brig was half-way across to the Galapagos (600 miles from Ecuador) the peon, who was on deck asleep, was suddenly seized, pitched down into the fo'c'stle, and the scuttle closed. Here he was left alone until dawn, and then ordered on deck, aft. The captain pointed a pistol at his head, and threatened to shoot him dead if he ever spoke of what had happened in the night. The man—although he knew nothing of what had happened—promised to be secret, and was then given fifty dollars, and put in the mate's watch. He saw numerous blood-stains on the after-deck, and soon after was told by one of the hands that all the four passengers had been murdered, and thrown overboard. The captain, mate and four men, it appeared, had first made ready a boat, provisioned, and lowered it. They made some noise, which aroused the male passengers, one of whom came on deck to see what was the matter. He was at once seized, but being a very powerful man, made a most determined fight. His friend rushed up from below with a revolver in his hand, and shot two of the assailants dead, and wounded the mate. But they were assailed on all sides—shot at and struck with various weapons, and then thrown overboard to drown. Then the pirates, after a hurried consultation, went

below, and forcing open the girls' cabin door, ruthlessly shot them, carried them on deck, and cast them over the side. It had been their intention to have sent all four away in the boat, but the resistance made so enraged them that they murdered them instead.

For some days the pirates kept on a due west course towards the Galapagos. A barrel of spirits was broached, and night and day captain and crew were drunk. When Albemarle Island was sighted, every one except the peon and a boy was more or less intoxicated. A boat had been lowered, and was towing astern—for what purpose the peon did not know. At night it fell a dead calm, and a strong current set the brig dangerously close in shore. The captain ordered some of the hands into her to tow the brig out of danger; they refused, and shots were exchanged, but after a while peace was restored. The peon and the boy were then told to get into the boat, and bale her out, as she was leaky. They did so, and whilst so engaged a sudden squall struck the brig, and the boat's towline either parted, or was purposely cast off.

When the squall cleared, the peon and boy in the drifting boat could see nothing whatever of the brig—she had probably capsized—and the two unfortunate beings soon after daylight found themselves so close to the breakers on Narborough Island that they were unable to pull her clear—she being very heavy. She soon struck, and was rolled over and over, and the Chileno boy drowned. The peon also received internal injuries, but managed to reach the shore.

The people on board the *Isaac Revels* did all they

could for the poor fellow, but he only survived a few days.

In another article in this volume I have told of my fruitless efforts to induce some of the Rook Island cannibals to "recruit" with me. It was on that voyage I first saw a party of New Guinea head-hunting pirates, and I shall never forget the experience.

After leaving Rook Island, we stood over to the coast of German New Guinea, and sailed along it for three hundred miles to the Dutch boundary (longitude 141 east of Greenwich) for we were in hopes of getting a full cargo of native labourers from some of the many islands which stud the coast. No other "labour" ship had ever been so far north, and Morel (the skipper) and I were keenly anxious to find a new ground. We had a fine vessel, with a high freeboard, a well-armed and splendid crew, and had no fear of being cut off by the natives. (I may here mention that I was grievously disappointed, for owing to the lack of a competent interpreter I failed to get a single recruit. But in other respects the voyage was a success, for I did some very satisfactory trading business.)

After visiting many of the islands, we anchored in what is now named in the German charts Krauel Bay, on the mainland. There were a few scattered villages on the shore, and some of the natives boarded us. They were all well-armed, with their usual weapons, but were very shy, distrustful and nervous.

Early one morning five large canoes appeared in the offing—evidently having come from the Schouten Islands group, about ten miles to the eastward. The

moment they were seen by the natives on shore, the villages were abandoned, and the people fled into the bush.

In a most gallant style the five canoes came straight into the bay, and brought-to within a few hundred fathoms of our ship, and the first thing we noticed was a number of decapitated heads hanging over the sides of each craft, as boat-fenders are hung over the gunwale of a boat. This was intended to impress the White Men.

We certainly were impressed, but were yet quite ready to make short work of our visitors if they attempted mischief. Our ship's high freeboard alone would have made it very difficult for them to rush us, and the crew were so well-armed that, although we numbered but twenty-eight, we could have wiped out over five hundred possible assailants with ease had they attempted to board and capture the ship.

Some of the leaders of this party of pirates came on board our vessel, and Morel and I soon established very friendly relations with them. They told us that they had been two months out from their own territory (in Dutch New Guinea) had raided over thirty villages, and taken two hundred and fifteen heads, and were now returning home—well satisfied.

Morel and I went on board one of the great canoes, and were received in a very friendly manner, and shown many heads—some partly dried, some too fresh, and unpleasant-looking.

These head-hunting pirates were not cannibals, and behaved in an extremely decorous manner when they

visited our ship. A finer, more stalwart, proud, self-possessed, and dignified lot of savages—if they could be so termed—I had never before seen.

They left Krauel bay two days later, without interfering with the people on shore, and Morel and I shook hands, and rubbed noses with the leading head-hunters, when we said farewell.

CHAPTER XXVII

PAUTŌE

"PLEASE, good White Man, wilt have me for *tavini* (servant)?"

Marsh, the trader, and the Reverend Harry Copley, the resident missionary on Motumoe, first looked at the speaker, then at each other, and then laughed hilariously.

A native girl, about thirteen years of age, was standing in the trader's doorway, clad only in a girdle of many-hued dracæna leaves. Her long, glossy black hair fell about her smooth red-brown shoulders like a mantle, and her big, deer-like eyes were filled with an eager expectancy.

"Come hither, Pautōe," said the missionary, speaking to the girl in the bastard Samoan dialect of the island. "And so thou dost want to become servant to Marsi?"

Pautōe's eyes sparkled.

"Aye," she replied, "I would be second *tavini* to him. No wages do I want, only let him give me my food, and a mat upon which to sleep, and I shall do much work for him—truly, much work."

The missionary drew her to him and patted her shoulder.

"Dost like sardines, Pautöe?"

She clasped her hands over her bosom, and looked at him demurely from underneath her beautiful long-lashed eyes, and then her red lips parted and she showed her even, pearly teeth as she smiled.

"Give her a tin of sardines, and a biscuit or two, Marsh," said the parson, "she's one of my pupils at the Mission House. You remember Bret Harte's story, *The Right Eye of the Spanish Commander*, and the little Indian maid Paquita? Well, this youngster is my Paquita. She's a most intelligent girl." He paused a moment and then added regretfully: "Unfortunately my wife dislikes her intensely—thinks she's too forward. As a matter of fact a more lovable child never breathed."

Marsh nodded. He was not surprised at Mrs. Copley disliking the child, for she—a thin, sharp-visaged and austere lady of forty years of age—was childless, and older than her cheerful, kind-hearted husband by twelve years. The natives bore her no love, and had given her the contemptuous nickname of *Le Matua moa e le fua*—"the eggless old hen".

Marsh himself told me this story. He and I had been shipmates together in many cruises until he tired of the sea, and, having saved a little money, started business as a trader among the Equatorial Islands—and I lost a good comrade and friend.

"I wish you would take the child, Marsh," said the missionary presently. "She is an orphan, and ——"

"I'll take her, of course. She can help Leota, I daresay, and I'll give her a few dollars a month. But

why isn't she dressed in the usual flaming style of your other pupils—skirt, blouse, brown paper-soled boots, and a sixpenny poke bonnet with artificial flowers, and otherwise made up as one of the 'brands plucked from the burning' whose photographs glorify the parish magazines in the old country?"

Copley's blue-grey eyes twinkled. "Ah, that's the rub with my wife. Pautöe won't 'put 'em on'. She is not a native of this island, as you can no doubt see. Look at her now—almost straight nose, but Semitic, thin nostrils, long silky hair, small hands and feet. Where do you think she hails from?"

"Somewhere to the eastward—Marquesas Group, perhaps."

"That is my idea, too. Do you know her story?"

"No. Who is she?"

"Ah, that no one knows. Early one morning twelve or thirteen years ago—long before I came here—the natives saw a small topsail-schooner becalmed off the island. Several canoes put off, and the people, as they drew near the vessel, were surprised and alarmed to see a number of armed men on deck, one of whom hailed them, and told them not to come on board, but that one canoe only might come alongside. But the natives hesitated, till the man stooped down and then held up a baby girl about a year old, and said:—

"'If you will take this child on shore and care for it I will give you a case of tobacco, a bag of bullets, two muskets and a keg of powder, some knives, axes and two fifty-pound tins of ship biscuit. The child's

mother is dead, and there is no woman on board to care for it.'

"For humanity's sake alone the natives would have taken the infant, and said so, but at the same time they did not refuse the offer of the presents. So one of the canoes went alongside, the babe was passed down, and then the presents. Then the people were told to shove off. A few hours later a breeze sprang up, and the schooner stood away to the westward. That was how the youngster came here."

"I wonder what had occurred?"

"A tragedy of some sort—piracy and murder most likely. One of the natives named Rahili who went out to the vessel, was an ex-sailor, who spoke and could also read and write English well, and he noticed that although the schooner was much weather-worn as if she had been a long while at sea, there was a newly-painted name on her stern—*Meta*. That in itself was suspicious. I sent an account of the affair to the colonial papers, but nothing was known of any vessel named the *Meta*. Since then the child had lived first with one family, and then another. As I have said, she is extremely intelligent, but has a curiously independent spirit—'refractory' my wife calls it—and does not associate with the other native girls. One day, not long ago, she got into serious trouble through her temper getting the better of her. Lisa, my native assistant's daughter is, as I daresay you know, a very conceited, domineering young lady, and puts on very grand airs—all these native teachers and their wives and daughters are alike with regard to the 'side' they

put on—and my wife has made so much of her that the girl has become a perfect female prig. Well, it seems that Pautōe refused to attend my wife's sewing class (which Lisa bosses) saying that she was going out on the reef to get crayfish. Thereupon Lisa called her a *laakau tafea* (a log of wood that had drifted on shore) and Pautōe, resenting the insult and the jeers and laughter of the other children, seized Mademoiselle Lisa by the hair, tore her blouse off her and called her 'a fat-faced, pig-eyed monster'."

Marsh laughed. "Description terse, but correct."

"The deacons expelled her from school, and ordered her a whipping, but the chief and I interfered, and stopped it."

The trader nodded approval. "Of course you did, Copley; just what any one who knows you would expect you to do. But although I am quite willing to give the child a home, I can't be a schoolmaster to her."

"Of course not. You are doing more than any other man would do for her."

. . . . . .

Twelve months had passed, and Marsh had never had reason to regret his kindness to the orphan. To him she was wonderfully gentle and obedient, and from the very first had acceded to his wish to dress herself in semi-European fashion. The trader's household consisted of himself and his two servants, a Samoan man named Āli (Harry) and his wife, Leota. For some years they had followed his fortunes as a trader in the South Seas, and both were intensely devoted to him. A childless couple, Marsh at first had feared

that they would resent the intrusion of Pautöe into his home. But he was mistaken; for both Āli and Leota had but one motive for existence, and that was to please him—the now grown man, who eleven years before, when he was a mere youth, had run away from his ship in Samoa, and they had hidden him from pursuit. And then when "Tikki" (Dick) Marsh, by his industrious habits, was enabled to begin life as a trader, they had come with him, sharing his good and his bad luck with him, and serving him loyally and devotedly in his wanderings throughout the Isles of the Pacific. So, when Pautöe came they took her to themselves as a matter of duty; then, as they began to know the girl, and saw the intense admiration she had for Marsh, they loved her, and took her deep into their warm hearts. And Pautöe would sometimes tell them that she knew not whom she loved most—"Tikki" or themselves.

Matters, from a business point of view, had not for two years prospered with Marsh on Motumoe. Successive seasons of drought had destroyed the cocoanut crop, and so one day he told Copley, who keenly sympathised with him, that he must leave the island. This was a twelvemonth after Pautöe had come to stay with him.

"I shall miss you very much, Marsh," said the missionary, "miss you more than you can imagine. My monthly visits to you here have been a great solace and pleasure to me. I have often wished that, instead of being thirty miles apart, we were but two or three, so that I could have come and seen you every few days."

Then he added: "Poor little Pautöe will break her heart over your going away".

"But I have no intention of leaving her behind, Copley. I am not so hard pressed that I cannot keep the youngster. I am thinking of putting her to school in Samoa for a few years."

"That is very generous of you, Marsh. I would have much liked to have taken her into my own house, but—my wife, you know."

Two weeks later Marsh left the island in an American whaleship, which was to touch at Samoa. There he intended to buy a small cutter, and then proceed to the Western Pacific, where he hoped to better his fortunes by trading throughout the various islands of the wild New Hebrides and Solomon Groups.

During the voyage to Samoa he one day asked Pautöe if she would not like to go to school in Samoa with white and half-caste girls, some of her own age, and others older.

Such an extraordinary change came over the poor child's face that Marsh was astounded. For some seconds she did not speak, but breathed quickly and spasmodically as if she were physically exhausted, then her whole frame trembled violently. Then a sob broke from her.

"Be not angry with me, Tikki, . . . but I would rather die than stay in Samoa, . . . away from thee and Āli and Leota. Oh, master——" she ceased speaking and sobbed so unrestrainedly that Marsh was moved. He waited till she had somewhat calmed herself, and then said gravely: —

"'Twill be a great thing for thee, Pautöe, this school. Thou wilt be taught much that is good, and the English lady who has the school will be kind ——"

"Nay, nay, Tikki," she cried brokenly, "send me not away, I beseech thee. Let me go with thee, and Āli and Leota, to those new, wild lands. Oh, cast me not away from thee. Where thou goest, let me go."

Marsh smiled. "Thou art another Ruth, little one. In such words did Ruth speak to Naomi when she went to another country. Dost know the story?"

"Aye, I know the story, and I have no fear of wild lands. Only have I fear of seeing no more all those I love if thou dost leave me to die in Samoa."

Again the trader smiled as he bade her dry her tears.

"Thou shalt come with us, little one. Now, go tell Leota."

For many months Marsh remained in Apia, unable to find a suitable vessel. Then, not caring to remain in such a noisy and expensive port—he rented a native house at a charmingly situated village called Laulii, about ten miles from Apia, and standing at the head of a tiny bay, almost landlocked by verdant hills. So much was he pleased with the place, that he half formed a resolution to settle there permanently, or at least for a year or two.

Āli and Leota were delighted to learn this, for although they were willing to go anywhere in the world with their beloved "Tikki," they, like all Samoans, were passionately fond of their own beautiful land, with its lofty mountains and forests, and clear running streams.

And Pautöe, too, was intensely happy, for to her Samoa was a dream-land of light and beauty. Never before had she seen mountains, except in pictures shown her by Mr. Copley or Marsh, and never before had she seen a stream of running water. For Motumoe, where she had lived all her young life, was an atoll—low, flat, and sandy, and although densely covered with coco palms, there were but few other trees of any height. And now, in Samoa, she was never tired of wandering alone in the deep, silent forest, treading with ecstasy the thick carpet of fallen leaves, gazing upwards at the canopy of branches, and listening with a thrilled delight to the booming notes of the great blue-plumaged, red-breasted pigeons, and the plaintive answering cries of the ring-doves. Then, too, in the forest at the back of the village were ruins of ancient dwellings of stone, build by hands unknown, preserved from decay by a binding net-work of ivy-like creepers and vines, and the haunt and resting-place of the wild boar and his mate, and their savage, quick-footed progeny. And sometimes she would hear the shrill, cackling scream of a wild mountain cock, and see the great, fierce-eyed bird, half-running, half-flying over the leaf-strewn ground. And to her the forest became a deep and holy mystery, to adore and to love.

Quite near to Laulii was another village—Lautonga, in which there lived a young American trader named Lester Meredith—like Marsh, an ex-sailor. He was an extremely reserved, quiet man, but he and Marsh soon became friends, and they exchanged almost daily visits. Meredith, like Marsh, was an unmarried man, and one

day the local chief of the district jocularly reproached them.

"Thou, Tikki, art near to two-score years, and yet hast no wife, and thou, Lesta, art one score and five and yet live alone. Why is it so? Ye are both fine, handsome men, and pleasing to the eyes of women."

Marsh laughed. "O Tofia, thou would-be matchmaker! I am no marrying man. Once, indeed, I gave my heart to a woman in mine own country of England, but although she loved me, her people were both rich and proud, and I was poor. So she became wife to another man."

Pautöe, who was listening intently to the men's talk, set her white teeth, and clenched her shapely little hands, and then said slowly:—

"Didst kill the other man, Tikki?"

Marsh and Meredith both laughed, and the former shook his head, and then Tofia turned to Meredith:—

"Lesta, hast never thought of Maliea, the daughter of Tonu? There is no handsomer girl in Samoa, and she is of good family. And she would like to marry thee."

Meredith smiled, and then said jestingly, "Nay, Tofia, I care not for Maliea. I shall wait for Pautöe. Wilt have me, little one?"

The girl looked at him steadily, and then answered gravely:—

"Aye, if Tikki is willing that I should. But yet I will not be separated from him."

"Then you and I will have to become partners, Meredith," said Marsh, his eyes twinkling with amusement.

. . . . . .

A few days after this Meredith returned from a visit to Apia.

"Marsh," he said to his friend, "I think it would be a good thing for us both if we really did go into partnership, and put our little capitals together. Are you so disposed?"

"Quite. There is nothing I should like better."

"Good. Well, now I have some news. I have just been looking at a little schooner in Apia harbour. She arrived a few days ago, leaking, and the owner will sell her for $1,800. She will suit us very well. I overhauled her, and except that she is old and leaks badly, from having been ashore, she is well worth the money. You and I can easily put her on the beach here, get at the leak, and recopper her at a cost of a few hundred dollars. We can have her ready for sea in three weeks. You, Āli and myself can do all the work ourselves."

Marsh was delighted, and in less than an hour the two men, accompanied by Āli and Tofia, were on the way to Apia, much to the wonder of Leota and Pautōe, who were not then let into the secret—the newly-made partners intending to give them a pleasant surprise.

On boarding the little craft, Marsh was much pleased with her, and during the day the business of transferring the vessel to her new owners was completed at the American Consulate, the money paid over, and the partners put in possession.

The same evening, Āli, a splendid diver, succeeded in finding and partly stopping the main leak, which was on the bilge on the port side, and preparations were made to sail early in the morning for Laulii.

The partners were seated in the little cabin, smoking, and talking over their plans for the future, when the former master and owner of the schooner came on board to see, as he said, "how they were getting on".

He was a good-natured, intelligent old man, and had had a life-long experience in the South Seas. By birth he was a Genoese, but he was intensely proud of being a naturalised British subject, and, from his youth, having sailed under the red ensign of Old England. Marsh and Meredith made him very welcome, and he, being mightily pleased at having sold *The Dove* (as the schooner was called), and also having dined exceedingly well at the one hotel then in Apia, became very talkative.

"I can tell you, gentlemen, that *The Dove*, although she is not a new ship, is as strong and sound as if she were only just built. I have had her now for nearly thirteen years, and have made my little fortune by her, and I could kiss her, from the end of her jibboom to the upper rudder gudgeon. But I am an old man now, and want to go back to my own country to die among my people—or else"—and here he twisted his long moustaches and laughed hilariously—"settle down in England, and become a grand man like old General Rosas of South America, and die pious, and have a bishop and a mile-long procession at my funeral."

The partners joined the old sailor in his laugh, and then Marsh said casually, and to make conversation:—

"By-the-way, Captain, where did you buy *The Dove?*"

"I didn't buy her, my bold breezy lads. And I didn't

steal her, as many a ship is stolen in the South Seas. I came by her honestly enough."

"A present?" said Meredith interrogatively.

"Wrong, my lad—neither was she a present." Then the ancient squared his broad shoulders, helped himself to some refreshment (more than was needed for his good) and clapping Marsh on the shoulder, said: "I'll tell you the yarn, my lads—for you are only lads, aren't you? Well, here it is:—

"About twelve or thirteen years ago I was mate of a San Francisco trading brig, the *Lola Montez*, and one afternoon, when we were running down the east coast of New Caledonia, we sighted a vessel drifting in shore —this very same schooner. The skipper of the brig sent me with a boat's crew to take possession of her—for we could see that no one was on board.

"I boarded her and found that her decks had been swept by a heavy sea—which, I suppose, had carried away every one on board. I overhauled the cabin, but could not find her papers, but her name was on the stern—*Meta*."

Marsh started, and was about to speak, but the old skipper went on:—

"During the night heavy weather came on, and the *Lola Montez* and the *Meta* parted company. The *Lola* was never heard of again—she was old and as rotten as an over-ripe pear, and I suppose her seams opened, and she went down.

"So I stuck to the *Meta*, brought her to Sydney, and re-named her *The Dove*. And she's a bully little ship, I can tell you. I think that she was built in the

Marquesas Islands, for all her knees and stringers are of *ngiia* wood (*lignum vitae*) cut in the Marquesan fashion, and set so closely together that any one would think she was meant for a Greenland whaler. Then there is another thing about her that you will notice, and which makes me feel sure that she was built by a whaleman, and that is the carvings of whales on each end of the windlass barrel, and on every deck stanchion there are the same, although you can hardly see them now—they are so much covered up by yearly coatings of paint for over a dozen years."

Meredith rose suddenly from his seat.

"You'll excuse me, but I feel tired, and must turn in."

The visitor took the hint, and did not stay. Wishing the partners good luck, he got into his boat, and pushed off for the shore.

Then Meredith turned to Marsh, and said quietly:—

"Marsh, I know that you can trust Āli, but what of Tofia?"

"He's all right, I think. But what is the matter?"

"I'll let you know presently. But first tell Tofia that he had better go on shore to sleep. You and I are going to have a quiet talk, and then do a little overhauling of this cabin."

Wondering what possibly was afoot, Marsh got rid of the friendly chief by asking him to go on shore and buy some fresh provisions, but not to trouble about bringing them off until daylight, as he and his partner were tired, and wanted to turn in.

Leaving Āli on deck to keep watch, the two men went below, and sat down at the cabin table.

"Marsh," began the young American, "I have a mighty queer yarn to tell you—I know that this schooner, once the *Meta*, and now *The Dove*, was originally the *Juliette*, and was built by my father at Nukahiva in the Marquesas. Now, I'll get through the story as quickly as possible, but as I don't want to be interrupted I'll ask Ali not to let any chance visitor come aboard to-night."

He went on deck, and on returning first filled and lit his pipe in his cool, leisurely manner, and resumed his story.

"My father, as I one day told you, was a whaling skipper, and was lost at sea about thirteen years ago—that is all I ever did say about him, I think. He was a hard old man, and there was no love between us, so that is why I have not spoken of him. He used me very roughly, and when my mother died I left him after a stormy scene. That was eighteen or nineteen years ago, and I never saw him again.

"When my poor mother died, he sold his ship and went to the Marquesas Islands, and opened a business there as a trader. He had made a lot of money at sperm whaling; and, I suppose, thought that as I had left him, swearing I never wished to see him again, that he would spend the rest of his days in the South Seas—money grubbing to the last.

"Sometimes I heard of him as being very prosperous. Once, when I was told that he had been badly hurt by a gun accident, I wrote to him and asked if he would care for me to come and stay with him. This I did for the sake of my dead mother. Nearly a year and a

half passed before I got an answer—an answer that cut me to the quick :—

"'I want no undutiful son near me. I do well by myself'.

"Several years went by, and then when I was mate of a trading schooner in the Fijis I was handed a letter by the American Consul. It was two years old, and was from my father—a long, long letter, written in such a kindly manner, and with such affectionate expressions that I forgave the old man all the savage and unmerited thrashings he had given me when I sailed with him as a lad.

"In this letter he told me that he wanted to see me again—that made me feel good—and that he had built a schooner which he had named *Juliette* after my mother, who was a French *Canadienne.* He described the labour and trouble he had taken over her, the knees and stringers of *ngiia* wood, and the carvings of sperm whales he had had cut on the windlass butts and stanchions. Then he went on to say that he had been having a lot of trouble with the French naval authorities, who wanted to drive all Englishmen and Americans out of the group, and had made up his mind to leave the Marquesas and settle down again either in Samoa or Tonga, where he hoped I would join him and forget how hardly he had used me in the past.

"The gun accident, he wrote, had rendered him all but blind, and he had engaged a man named Krause, a German, as mate, and to navigate the *Juliette* to Tonga or Samoa. Krause, he said, was a man he did not like, nor trust; but as he was a good sailor-man

and could navigate, he had engaged him, as he could get no one else at Nukahiva.

"With my father were a party of Marquesan natives —a chief and his wife and her infant, and two young men. The schooner's crew were four Dagoes—deserters from some ship. He did not care about taking them, but had no choice.

"Some ten days before the German and the crew came on board, my father secretly took all his money —$8,000 in gold—and, aided by the Marquesan chief, made a secure hiding-place for it by removing the skin in the transoms, and then packing it in oakum and wedging each package in between the timbers. Then he carefully relaid the skin, and repainted the whole. He said, 'If anything happens to me through treachery, no one will ever discover that money, although they will get a couple of thousand of Mexican silver dollars in my chest'.

"Well, the *Juliette* sailed, and was never again heard of.

"That brings my story to an end, and if this is the *Juliette*, and the money has not been taken, it is within six feet of us—there," and he pointed calmly to the transoms.

Marsh was greatly excited.

"We shall soon see, Meredith. But first let me say that I am sure that this is your father's missing schooner, and that she is the vessel that thirteen years ago called at Motumoe, and those who sailed her sent Pautöe on shore when she was an infant."

Then he hurriedly related the story as told to him by Mr. Copley.

Meredith nodded. "No doubt the missionary was right and my father's fears were well-founded. I suppose the German and the Dagoes murdered him and the four Marquesans. Krause, of course, would know that my poor father had money on board. And I daresay that the Dagoes spared the child out of piety—their Holy Roman consciences wouldn't let 'em cut the throat of a probably unbaptised child. Now, Marsh, if you'll clear away the cushions and all the other gear from the transoms, I'll get an auger and an axe, and we'll investigate."

Rising from his seat in his usual leisurely manner, he went on deck, and returned in a few minutes with a couple of augers, an axe, two wedges, and a heavy hammer.

Marsh had cleared away the cushions and some boxes of provisions, and was eagerly awaiting him.

Meredith, first of all, took the axe, and, with the back of the head, struck the casing of the transoms.

"It's all right, Marsh. Either the money, or something else is there right enough, I believe. Bore away on your side."

The two augers were quickly biting away through the hard wood of the casing, and in less than two minutes Marsh felt the point of his break through the inner skin, and then enter something soft; then it clogged, and finally stuck. Reversing the auger, he withdrew it, and saw that on the end were some threads of oakum and canvas, which he excitedly showed to his partner, who nodded, and went on boring in an unmoved manner, until the point of his auger pene-

trated the planking, stuck, and then came a sound of it striking loose metal. The wedges were then driven in between the planking, and one strip prised off, and there before them was the money in small canvas bags, each bag parcelled round with oakum, which was also packed tightly between the skin and timbers, forming a compact mass.

Removing one bag only, Marsh placed it aside, then they replaced the plank, plugged the auger holes, and hid the marks from view by stacking the provision cases along the transoms.

Āli was called below, and told of the discovery. He, of course, was highly delighted, and his eyes gleamed when Meredith unfastened the bag, and poured out a stream of gold coin upon the cabin table.

That night the partners did not sleep. They talked over their plans for the future, and decided to take the schooner to San Francisco, sell her, and buy a larger vessel and a cargo of trade goods. Meredith was to command, and Tahiti in the Society Group was to be their headquarters. Here Marsh (with the faithful Āli and Leota, and, of course, Pautōe) was to buy land and form a trading station, whilst the vessel was to cruise throughout the South Seas, trading for oil, pearl-shell and other island produce.

Soon after daylight the anchor of the *Juliette* was lifted and she sailed out of Apia harbour, and by noon, Leota and Pautōe were astonished to see the little craft bring-to abreast of Laulii village, and Marsh and Meredith come on shore.

Later on in the day, when the house was free of

the kindly, but somewhat intrusive native visitors, the partners told the strange story of the *Juliette* to Leota and Pautöe, and of their plans for the future.

"Pautöe," said Meredith, "in three years' time will you marry me, and sail with me in the new ship?"

"Aye, that will I, Lesta. Did I not say so before?"

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE MAN WHO KNEW EVERYTHING

THE Man Who Knew Everything came to Samoa in November, when dark days were on the land, and the nearing Christmas time seemed likely to be as that of the preceding one, when burning villages and the crackle of musketry, and the battle cries of opposing factions, engaged in slaughtering one another, turned the once restful and beautiful Samoa into a hell of evil passions, misery and suffering. For the poor King Malietoa was making a game fight with his scanty and ill-armed troops against the better-armed rebel forces, who were supplied, *sub rosa*, with all the arms and ammunition they desired by the German commercial agents of Bismarck, who had impressed upon that statesman the necessity of making Samoa the base of German trading enterprise in the South Seas by stirring up rebellion throughout the group to such an extent that Germany, under the plea of humanity, would intervene—buy out the British and American interests, and force the natives to accept a German protectorate.

At this time the white population of Apia numbered about two hundred, of whom one half were Germans—

the rest were principally English and Americans. For two years past a very bitter feeling had existed between the staff of the great German trading firm, and the British and American community. The latter had their places of business in Apia, and the suburb of Matautu, the Germans occupied the suburb of Matafēle, and although there was a business intercourse between the people of the three nationalities, there was absolutely none of a social character. The British and American traders and residents were supporters of King Malietoa, the Germans backed up the rebel party, and the natives themselves were equally divided into pro-British, and pro-Germans.

At this time—when the Man Who Knew Everything arrived in Samoa from New Zealand—I was living on shore. The vessel in which I was employed as "recruiter" in the Kanaka labour trade was laid up in Apia harbour. Two months previously we had brought a cargo of native labourers from the Gilbert Islands to be indentured to the cotton planters in Samoa, and finding the country in such a disturbed state, with business paralysed, and no further demand for a fresh cargo of Kanaka "recruits," we decided to pay off most of the ship's company, and let the brigantine lie up till the end of the rainy and bad weather season—from the end of November till March. The skipper and a few of the native crew remained on board, but I took up my quarters on shore, at a little Samoan village named Lelepa—two miles from Apia. Here I was the "paying guest" of our boatswain—a stalwart native of the island of Rarotonga. He had sailed with me on several

vessels during a period of some years; and on one of our visits to Apia had married a Samoan girl of a good family.

Having much spare time on my hands I occupied it in deep-sea fishing and shooting, and in making boat voyages along the coast, visiting a number of native villages, where I was well-known to the people, who always made me and my boat's crew very welcome—for the Samoans are naturally a most hospitable race, and love visiting and social intercourse. On these excursions Marama (the native boatswain) and some other of the ship's crew sometimes came with me; on other occasions my party would be made up of the two half-caste sons of the American Consul, two or three Samoans and myself.

Towards the end of November there arrived from Auckland (N.Z.) the trading schooner *Dauntless*. She brought one passenger whose acquaintance I soon made, and whom I will call Marchmont. He was a fine, well-set-up young fellow of about five and twenty years of age, and I was delighted to find that he was a good all-round sportsman—I could never induce any of the white traders or merchants of Apia to join me in any of my many delightful trips. Marchmont was making a tour through the Pacific Islands, partly on business, and partly on pleasure. He was visiting the various groups on behalf of a Liverpool firm, who were buying up land suitable for cotton-growing, and was to spend two months in Samoa.

He and I soon made arrangements for a series of fishing and shooting trips along the south coast of Upolu,

where the country was quiet, and as yet undisturbed by the war. But, although Marchmont was a most estimable and companionable man in many respects, he had some serious defects in his character, which, from a sportsman's point of view, were most objectionable, and were soon to bring him into trouble. One was that he was most intensely self-opinionated, and angrily resented being contradicted—even when he knew he was in the wrong; another was his bad temper—whenever he did anything particularly foolish he would not stand a little good-natured "chaff"—he either flew into a violent rage and "said things" or sulked like a boy of ten years of age. Then, too, another regrettable feature about him was the fact that he, being a young man of wealth, had the idea that he should always be deferred to, never argued with upon any subject, and his advice sought upon everything pertaining to sport. These unpromising traits in his character soon got him into hot water, and before he had been a week in Samoa he was nicknamed by both whites and natives "Misi Ulu Poto—māsani mea uma,"—"Mr. Wise Head—the Man Who Knows Everything". The term stuck—and Marchmont took it quite seriously, as a well-deserved compliment to his abilities.

My new acquaintance, I must mention, had a most extensive and costly sporting outfit—all of it was certainly good, but much of it quite useless for such places as Samoa and other Polynesian Islands. Of rifles and guns he had about a dozen, with an enormous quantity of ammunition and fittings, bags, water-proofing, tents, fishing-boots, spirit stoves, hatchets in leather covers,

hunting knives, etc., etc.; and his fishing gear alone must have run into a tidy sum of money. This latter especially interested me, but there was nothing in it that I would have exchanged for any of my own—that is, for deep-sea fishing, a sport in which I was always very keen during a past residence of fifteen years in the South Seas. When I showed my gear to Marchmont he criticised it with great cheerfulness and freedom, and somewhat irritated me by frequently ejaculating "Bosh!" when I explained why in fishing at a depth of 100 to 150 fathoms for a certain species of *Ruvettus* (a nocturnal-feeding fish that attains a weight of over 100 lb.) a heavy wooden hook was always used by the natives in preference to a steel hook of European manufacture. I saw that it was impossible to convince him, so dropped the subject; and showed him other gear of mine—flying-fish tackle, barbless pearl-shell hooks for bonito, etc., etc. He "bosh-ed" nearly everything, and wound up by saying that he wondered why people of sense accepted the dicta of natives in sporting matters generally.

"But I imagine that they do know a little about such things," I observed.

"Bosh!—they pretend to, that's all. Now, I've never yet met a Kanaka who could show me anything, and I've been to Tonga, Fiji and Tahiti."

. . . . . .

Early one morning, I sent off my whaleboat with Marama in charge to proceed round the south end of Upolu, and meet Marchmont and me at a village on the lee side of the island named Siumu, which is about eighteen miles distant from, and almost opposite to

Apia, across the range that traverses the island. An hour or so later Marchmont and I set out, accompanied by two boys to carry our game bags, provisions, etc. Each of them wore suspended from his neck a large white cowrie shell—the Samoan badge of neutrality—for we had to pass first through King Malietoa's lines, and then through those of the besieging rebel forces.

It was a lovely day, and in half an hour we were in the delightful gloom of the sweet-smelling mountain forest. In passing through King Malietoa's trenches, the local chief of Apia, Se'u Manu, who was in command, requested me to stay and drink kava with him. Politeness required consent, and we were delayed an hour; this made the Man Who Knew Everything very cross and rather rude, and the stalwart chief (afterwards to become famous for his magnanimous conduct to his German foes, when their squadron was destroyed in the great *Calliope* gale of March, 1889) looked at him with mild surprise, wondering at his discourtesy. However, his temper balanced itself a little while after leaving the lines, when he brought down a brace of fine pigeons with a right and left shot, and a few minutes later knocked over a mountain cock with my Winchester. It was a very clever shot—for the wild cock of Samoa, the descendant of the domestic rooster, is a hard bird to shoot even with a shot gun—and my friend was much elated. He really was a first-class shot with either gun or rifle, though he had had but little experience with the latter.

A few miles farther brought us to the little mountain village of Tagiamamanono. It was occupied by the

rebel troops from the Island of Savai'i. Their chiefs were very courteous, and, of course, we were asked to "stay and rest and drink kava". To refuse would have been looked upon as boorish and insulting, so I cheerfully acquiesced, and Marchmont and I were escorted to a large house, where I formally presented him to our hosts as a traveller from "Peretania," whom I was "showing around Samoa". Any man of fine physique attracts the Samoans, and a number of pretty girls who were preparing the kava cast many admiring glances at my friend, and commented audibly on his good looks.

Presently, as we were all smoking and exchanging compliments in the high-flown, stilted Samoan style, there entered the house a strapping young warrior, carrying a wickerwork cage, in which were two of the rare and famous *Manu Mea* (red-bird) of Samoa—the *Didunculus* or tooth-billed pigeon. These were the property of the young chief commanding the rebel troops, and had simply been brought into the house as a mark of respect and attention to Marchmont and me. Money cannot always buy these birds, and the rebel chief looked upon them as mascottes. No one but himself, or the young man who was their custodian, dared touch them, for a Samoan chief's property—like his person—is sacred and inviolate from touch except by persons of higher rank than himself. I hurriedly and quietly explained this to Marchmont.

"Bosh! Look here! You tell him that I want to buy those birds, and will give him a sovereign each for them."

"I shall do no such thing. I know what I am talking about, and you don't. Fifty sovereigns would not buy those birds—so don't say anything more on the subject. If you do, you will give offence—and these Samoans are very touchy."

"Bah—that's all bosh, my dear fellow. Any way, I'll give five pounds for the pair," and to my horror, and before I could stay him, he took out five sovereigns, and "skidded" them along the matted floor towards the chief, a particularly irascible young man named Asi (Sandalwood).

"There, my friend, are five good English sovereigns for your birds. I suppose I can trust you to send them to the English Consul at Apia for me. Eh?"

There was a dead silence. Asi spoke English perfectly, but hitherto, out of politeness, had only addressed me in Samoan. His eyes flashed with quick anger at Marchmont, then he looked at me reproachfully, made a sign to the custodian of the birds, and rising proudly to his feet, said to me in Samoan:—

"I will drink kava with you alone, friend. Will you come to my own house," and he motioned me to precede him. Never before had I seen a naturally passionate man exhibit such a sense of dignity and self-restraint under what was, to him, a stupid insult.

I turned to Marchmont: "Look what you have done, confound you for an ass! If you are beginning this way in Samoa you will get yourself into no end of trouble. Have you no sense?"

"I have sense enough to see that you are making a lot of fuss over nothing. Tell the beastly savage that

he can keep his wretched birds. I would only have wrung their necks and had them cooked."

The young warrior who held the cage, set it down, and striding up beside the Man Who Knew Everything dealt him an open-handed back-hand blow on the side of the head—a favourite trick of Samoan wrestlers and fighters—and Marchmont went down upon the matted floor with a smash. I thought he was killed—he lay so motionless—and in an instant there flashed across my memory a story told to me by a medical missionary in Samoa, of how one of these terrific back-handed "smacks" dealt by a native had broken a man's neck.

However, in a few minutes, Marchmont recovered, and rose to his feet, spoiling for a fight. The natives regarded him with a sullen but assumed indifference, and drew back, looking at me inquiringly. The matter might have ended seriously, but for two things—Marchmont was at heart a gentleman, and in response to my urgent request to him to apologise for the gross affront he had put upon our host—did so frankly by first extending his hand to the man who had knocked him down. And then, as he never did things by halves, he came with me to Asi and said, as he shook hands with him:—

"By Jove, Mr. Asi, that man of yours could knock down a bullock. I never had such a thundering smack in my life."

The chief smiled, then said gravely, in English, that he was sorry that such an unpleasant incident had occurred. Then, after—with its many attendant cere-

monies—we had drunk our bowls of kava, and were smoking and chatting, Asi asked Marchmont to let him examine his gun and rifle (Marchmont had a Soper rifle and one of Manton's best make of guns; I had my Winchester and a fairly good gun). The moment Asi saw the Soper rifle his eyes lit up, and he produced another from one of the house beams overhead, and said regretfully that he had no cartridges left, and was using a Snider instead. Marchmont promptly offered to give him fifty.

"You must not do that," I said, "it will get us into serious trouble. Asi"—and I turned to the chief—"will understand why we must not give him cartridges to be used for warfare. It would be a great breach of faith for us to do so—would it not?"

Keenly anxious as he was to obtain possession of the ammunition, the chief, with a sigh of regret, acquiesced, but Marchmont sulked, and for quite two hours after we had left the rebel village did not exchange a word with me.

After getting over the range, and whilst we were descending the slope to the southern littoral, some mongrel curs that belonged to our carriers, and had gone on ahead of us, put up a wild sow with seven suckers, and at once started off in pursuit. The old, razor-backed sow doubled and came flying past us, with her nimble-footed and striped progeny following. Marchmont and I both fired simultaneously—at the sow. I missed her, but my charge of No 3 shot tumbled over one of the piglets, which was at her heels, and Marchmont's Soper bullet took her in the belly, and passed clean through

her. But although she went down for a few moments she was up again like a Jack-in-the-box, and with an angry squeal scurried along the thick carpet of dead leaves, and then darted into the buttressed recesses of a great *masa'oi* (cedar) tree, which was evidently her home, followed by two or three game mongrels.

Dropping his rifle, Marchmont ran to the trees, seized the nearest cur by the tail, and slung it away down the side of the slope, then he kicked the others out of his way, and kneeling down peered into the dark recess formed by two of the buttresses.

"Come out of that," I shouted, "you'll get bitten if you go near her. What are you trying to do? Get out, and give the dogs a chance to turn her out."

"Bosh! Mind your own business. I know what I'm about. She's lying inside, as dead as a brickbat. I'll have her out in a jiffy," and then his head and shoulders disappeared—then came a wild, blood-curdling yell of rage and pain, and the Man Who Knew Everything backed out with the infuriated sow's teeth deeply imbedded into both sides of his right hand; his left gripped her by the loose and pendulous skin of her throat. One of the native boys darted to his aid, and with one blow of his hatchet split open the animal's skull.

"Well, of all the born idiots ——" I began, when I stopped, for I saw that Marchmont's face was very pale, and that he was suffering excruciating pain. A pig bite is always dangerous and that which he had sustained was a serious one. Fortunately, it was bleeding profusely, and as quickly as possible we procured water, and thoroughly cleansed, and then bound up his hand.

As soon as we got to Siumu I hurried to the house of the one white trader, and was lucky in getting a bottle of that good old-fashioned remedy—Friar's balsam. I poured it into a clean basin, and Marchmont unhesitatingly put in his hand, and let it stay there. The agony was great, and the language that poured from the patient was of an extremely lurid character. But he had wonderful grit, and I had to laugh when he began abusing himself for being such an idiot. He then allowed a native woman to cover the entire hand with a huge poultice, made of the beaten-up pulp of wild oranges—a splended antiseptic. But it was a week before he could use his hand again, and his temper was something abominable. However, we managed to put in the time very pleasantly by paying a round of visits to the villages along the coast, and were entertained and feasted to our heart's content by the natives. Then followed some days' grand pig hunting and pigeon shooting in the mountains, amidst some of the most lovely tropical scenery in the world. Marchmont killed a grand old tusker, and presented the tusks to the local chief, who in return gave him a very old kava bowl—a valuable article to Samoans. He was, as usual, incredulous when I told him that it was worth £10, and that Theodor Weber, the German Consul General, who was a collector, would be only too glad to get it at that price.

"What, for that thing?"

"Yes, for that thing. Quite apart from its size, its age makes it valuable. I daresay that more than half a century has passed since the tree from which it was

made was felled by stone axes, and the bowl cut out from a solid piece." It was fifteen inches high, two feet in diameter, and the four legs and exterior were black with age, whilst the interior, from constant use of kava, was coated with a bright yellow enamel. The labour of cutting out such a vessel with such implements—it being, legs and bowl, in one piece—must have taken long months. Then came the filing down with strips of shark skin, which had first been softened, and then allowed to dry and contract over pieces of wood, round and flat; then the final polishing with the rough underside of wild fig-leaves, and then its final presentation, with such ceremony, to the chief who had ordered it to be made.

I explained all this to Marchmont, and he actually believed me and did not say "Bosh!"

"I thought that you made a fearfully long-winded oration on my behalf when the chief gave me the thing," he remarked.

"I did. I can tell you, Marchmont, that I should have felt highly flattered if he had presented it to me. He seems to have taken a violent fancy to you. But, for Heaven's sake, don't think that, because he has been told that you are a rich man, he has any ulterior motive. And don't, I beg of you, offer him money. He has a reason for showing his liking for you."

I knew what that reason was. Suisala, the chief of Siumu, had, from the very first, expressed to me his admiration of Marchmont's stalwart, athletic figure, and his fair complexion, and was anxious to confer on him a very great honour—that of exchanging

names. Suisala was of one of the oldest and most chiefly families in Samoa, and was proud of the fact that the French navigator Bougainville had taken especial notice of his grandfather (who was also a Suisala) and who had been presented with a fowling piece and ammunition by the French officer. As I have before mentioned, physical strength and manliness always attract the Samoan mind, and the chief of Siumu had, as I afterwards explained to Marchmont, fallen a victim to his "fatal beauty".

One morning, a few days after the presentation of the *tanoa* (kava-bowl) to the Man Who Knew Everything, a schooner appeared outside the reef and hove-to, there being no harbour at Siumu. She was an American vessel, and had come to buy copra from, and land goods for, the local trader. There was a rather heavy sea running on the reef at the time, and the work of shipping the copra and landing the stores proved so difficult and tedious that I lent my boat and crew to help. Unfortunately Marama was laid up with influenza, so could not take charge of the boat; I also was on the sick list, with a heavy cold. However, my crew were to be trusted, and they made several trips during the morning. Marchmont, after lunch, wanted to board the schooner, and also offered to take charge of the boat and crew for the rest of the day. Knowing that he was not used to surf work, I declined his offer, but told him he could go off on board if he did not mind a wetting. He was quite nettled, and angrily asked me if I thought he could not take a whaleboat through a bit of surf as well as

either Marama or myself. I replied frankly that I did not.

He snorted with contempt. "Bosh. I've taken boats through surf five times as bad as it is now—a tinker could manage a boat in the little sea that is running now. You fellows are all alike—you think that you and your natives know everything."

"Oh, then, do as you like," I replied angrily, "but if you smash that boat it means a loss of £50, and ——"

"Hang your £50! If I hurt your boat, I'll pay for the damage. But don't begin to preach at me."

With great misgivings, I saw the boat start off, manned by eight men, using native paddles, instead of oars, as was customary in surf work. Marchmont, certainly, by good luck, managed to get her over the reef, for I could see that he was quite unused to handling a steer oar. However, my native crew, by watching the sea and taking no heed of the steersman, shot the boat over the reef into deep water beyond. But in getting alongside the schooner he nearly swamped, and I was told began abusing my crew for a set of blockheads. This, of course, made them sulky—to be abused for incompetence by an incompetent stranger, was hard to bear, especially as the men, like all the natives of their islands (Rotumah and Niue), were splendid fellows at boat work.

However, the boat at last cast off, and headed for the shore, and then I saw something that filled me with wrath. As the lug sail was being hoisted, Marchmont drew in his steer-oar, and shipped the rudder, and in another minute the boat was bounding over the

rolling seas at a great rate towards the white breakers on the reef, but steering so wildly that I foresaw disaster. The crew, in vain, urged Marchmont to ship the steer-oar again, but he told them to mind their own business, and sat there, calm and strong, in his mighty conceit.

On came the boat, and we on shore watched her as she rose stern up to a big comber, then down she sank from view into the trough, broached to, and the next roller fell upon and smothered her, and rolled her over and over into the wild boil of surf on the reef.

The Man Who Knew Everything came off badly, and was brought on shore full of salt water, and unconscious. He had been dashed against the jagged coral, and from his left thigh down to his foot had been terribly lacerated; then as the crew swam to his assistance—for his clothing had caught in the coral, and he was under water and drowning—and brought him to the surface, the despised steer-oar (perhaps out of revenge) came hurtling along on a swirling sea, and the haft of it struck him a fearful blow on the head, nearly fracturing his skull.

Fearing his injuries would prove fatal, I sent a canoe off to the schooner with a message to the captain to come on shore, but the vessel, having finished her business, was off under full sail, and did not see the canoe. Then the trader and I did our best for the poor fellow, who, as soon as he regained consciousness, began to suffer agonies from the poison of the wounds inflicted by the coral. We sent a runner to Apia for a doctor, and early next morning one arrived.

Marchmont was quite a month recovering, and when he was fully convalescent, he kept his opinions to himself, and I think that the lesson he had received did him good. He afterwards told me that he determined to sail the boat in with a rudder purely to annoy me, and was sorry for it.

. . . . . .

When he was able to get about again as usual, the devil of restlessness again took possession of him and he was soon in trouble again—through the bursting of a gun. I was away from Apia at the time—at the little island of Manono, buying yams for the ship which was getting ready for sea again—when I received a letter from a friend giving me the Apia gossip, and was not surprised that Marchmont figured therein.

"Your friend Marchmont," so ran the letter, "is around, as usual, and in great form, though he had a narrow squeak of having his head blown off last week through his gun bursting while out pigeon-shooting up by Lano-tō lake. It seems that it was raining at the time, and the track down the mountain to the lake was very slippery. He had Johnny Coe the half-caste, and two Samoans with him. Was carrying his gun under his arm and going down the track in his usual careless, cock-a-hoopy style when he tripped over a root of a tree and went down flat on his face, into the red slippery soil. He picked himself up again quick enough, and began swearing at the top of his voice, when a lot of ducks rose from the lake and came dead on towards him. Without waiting to see if his gun was all right, although it was covered with mud, he pulled the

trigger of his right barrel, and it burst; one of the fragments gave him a nasty jagged wound on the chin and the Samoan buck got a lot of small splinters in his face. After the idiot had pulled himself together he examined his gun and found that the left barrel was plugged up with hard red earth. No doubt the other one had also been choked up, for Johnny Coe said that when he fell the muzzle of the gun was rammed some inches into the ground."

When I returned to Apia with a cutter load of yams, I called on Marchmont and found him his old self. He casually mentioned his mishap and cursed the greasy mountain track as the cause. At the same time he told me that he was beginning to like the country and that the natives were "not a bad lot of fellows—if you know how to take 'em".

Then came his final exploit.

There is, in the waters of the Pacific Isles, a species of the trevalli, or rudder fish, which attains an enormous size and weight. It is a good eating fish, like all the trevalli tribe, and much thought of by both Europeans and natives, for, being an exceedingly wary fish, it is not often caught, at least in Samoa. In the Live Islands, where it is more common, it is called *La'heu*, and in Fiji *Sanka*. One evening Lama, one of the Coe half-caste boys, and I succeeded in hooking and capturing one of these fish, weighing a little over 100 lb. In the morning the Man Who Knew Everything came to look at it, was much interested, and said he would have a try for one himself after lunch.

"No use trying in clear daylight," I said; "after dusk, at night (if not moonlight), or before daybreak is the time."

"Bosh!" was his acidulous comment. "I've caught the same fish in New Zealand in broad daylight." I shook my head, knowing that he was wrong. He became angry, and remarked that he had found that all white men who had lived in foreign countries for a few years accepted the rubbishy dictum of natives regarding sporting matters of any kind as infallible. Refusing to show me the tackle he intended using, at two o'clock he hired a native canoe, and paddled off alone into Apia Harbour. Then he began to fish for *La'heu*, using a mullet as bait. In five minutes he was fast to a good-sized and lusty shark, which promptly upset the canoe, went off with the line and left him to swim. The officer of the deck of the French gunboat *Vaudreuil*, then lying in the port, sent a boat and picked him up. This annoyed him greatly, as he wanted, like an idiot, to swim on shore—a thing that a native would not always care to do in a shark-infested place like Apia Harbour, especially during the rainy season (as it then was), when the dreaded *tanifa* sharks come into all bays or ports into which rivers or streams debouch.

That evening, however, Marchmont condescended to look at the tackle I used for *La'heu*, said it was clumsy, and only fit for sharks, but, on the whole, there were "some good ideas" about it; also that he would have another try that night. I suggested that either one of the Coe lads or Lama should go with him, to which he said "Bosh!" Then, after sunset, I sent some of my

boat's-crew to catch flying-fish for bait. They brought a couple of dozen, and I told Marchmont that he should bait with a whole flying-fish, make his line ready for casting, and then throw over some "burley"—half a dozen flying-fish chopped into small pieces. He would not show me the tackle he intended using, so I was quite in the dark as to what manner of gear it was. But I ascertained later on that it was good and strong enough to hold any deep sea fish, and the hook was of the right sort—a six-inch flatted, with curved shank, and swivel mounted on to three feet of fine twisted steel seizing wire. My obstinate friend had a keen eye, even when he was most disparaging in his remarks, and had copied my *La'heu* tackle most successfully, although he had "bosh-ed" it when I first showed it to him.

Refusing to let any one accompany him, although the local pilot candidly informed him that he was a dunderhead to go fishing alone at night in Apia Harbour, Marchmont started off about 2 A.M. in an ordinary native canoe, meant to hold not more than three persons when in smooth water. It was a calm night, but rainy, and the crew of the French gunboat noticed him fishing near the ship about 2.30. A little while after, the officer of the watch saw a heavy rain squall coming down from the mountain gorges, and good-naturedly called out to the fisherman to either come alongside or paddle ashore, to avoid being swamped. The clever man replied in French, somewhat ungraciously, that he could quite well look after himself. A little after 3 A.M. the squall ceased, and as neither

Marchmont nor the canoe was visible, the French sailors concluded that he had taken their officer's advice and gone on shore.

About seven o'clock in the morning, as I was bathing in the little river that runs into Apia Harbour, a native servant girl of the local resident medical missionary came to the bank and called to me, and told me a startling story. My obstinate friend had been picked up at sea, four miles from Apia Harbour, by a *taumualua* (native-built whaleboat). He was in a state of exhaustion and collapse, and when brought into Apia was more dead than alive, and the doctor was quickly summoned. I at once went to see him, but was not admitted to his room, and for three days he had to lie up, suffering from shock—and, I trust, a feeling of humility for being such an obstinate blockhead.

His story was simple enough: During the heavy rain squall his bait was taken by some large and powerful fish (he maintained that it was a *La'heu*, though most probably it was a shark), and thirty or forty yards of line flew out before he could get the pull of it. When he did, he foolishly made the loose part fast to the canoe seat amidships, and the canoe promptly capsized, and the fore end of the outrigger unshipped. Clinging to the side of the frail craft, he shouted to the gunboat for help, but no one heard in the noise of the wind and heavy rain, and in ten minutes he found himself in the passage between the reefs, and rapidly being towed out to sea. He tried to sever the line by biting it through (he had lost his knife), but only succeeded in losing a tooth. Then, as the canoe was being dragged

through the water broadside on, a heavy sea submerged her and the line parted, the shark or whatever it was going off. Never losing his pluck, he tried in the darkness to secure the loose end of the outrigger, but failed, owing to the heavy, lumpy seas. Then for two anxious, miserable hours he clung to the canoe, expecting every moment to find himself minus his legs by the jaws of a shark, and when sighted and picked up by the native boat he was barely conscious.

He learnt a lesson that did him good. He never again went out alone in a canoe at night, and for many days after his recovery he never uttered the word "Bosh!"

CHAPTER XXIX

THE PATTERING OF THE MULLET

IT is a night of myriad stars, shining from a dome of deepest blue. The lofty, white-barked swamp gums stand silent and ghost-like on the river's bank, and the river itself is almost as silent as it flows to meet the roaring surf on the bar of the rock-bound coast fifteen miles away, where when the south-east wind blows lustily by day and dies away at night the long billows of the blue Pacific roll on unceasingly.

Overhead, far up in the topmost boughs of one of the giant gums some opossums squeal angrily at an intruding native bear, which, like themselves, has climbed to feed upon the young and tender eucalyptus leaves. Below, a prowling dingo steals slowly over the thick carpet of leaves, then sitting on his haunches gazes at the prone figures of two men stretched out upon their blankets at the foot of the great tree. His green, hungry eyes have discerned a pair of saddle-bags and his keen nostrils tell him that therein are salt beef and damper. He sinks gently down upon the yielding leaves and for a minute watches the motionless forms; then he rises and creeps, creeps along. A horse bell tinkles from beyond the scrub and in an instant the

wild dog lies flat again. Did he not see one of the men move? No, all is quiet, and once more he creeps forward. Then from beneath the tree there comes a flash and a report and a bullet flies and the night prowler leaps in the air with a snarling yelp and falls writhing in his death agony, as from the sand flats in the river arises the clamour of startled wild fowl and the rush and whirr of a thousand wings. Then silence again, save for the long-drawn wail of a curlew.

One of the men rises, kicks together the dying camp fire and throws on a handful of sticks and leaves. It blazes up and a long spear of light shoots waveringly across the smooth current of the river.

"Get him, Harry?" sleepily asks his companion as he sits up and feels for his pipe.

"Yes—couldn't miss him. He's lying there. Great Scott! Didn't he jump."

"Poor beggar—smelt the tucker, I suppose. Well, better a dead dog than a torn saddle-bag. Hear the horses?"

"Yes, they're all right—feeding outside the timber belt. How's the time, Ted?"

"Three o'clock. What a deuce of a row those duck and plover kicked up when you fired! We ought to get a shot or two at them when daylight comes."

"Harry," a big, bearded fellow of six feet, nodded as he lit his pipe.

"Yes, we ought to get all we want up along the blind creeks, and we'll have to shift camp soon. It's going to rain before daybreak, and we might as well stay here over to-morrow and give the horses a spell."

"It's clouding over a bit, but I don't think it means rain."

"I do. Listen," and he held up his hand towards the river.

His companion listened, and a low and curious sound—like rain and yet not like rain—a gentle and incessant pit-a-pat, pit-a-pat, pit-a-pat, then a break for a few seconds, then again, sometimes sounding loud and near, at others faintly and far away.

"Sounds like a thousand people knockin' their finger nails on tables. Why, it must be rainin' somewhere close to on the river."

"No, it's the pattering of mullet, heading up the river—thousands, tens of thousands, aye hundreds of thousands. It is a sure sign of heavy rain. We'll see them presently when they come abreast of us. That queer *lip, lap, lip, lap* you hear is made by their tails. They sail along with heads well up out of the water—the blacks tell me that they smell the coming rain—then swim on an even keel for perhaps twenty yards or so, and the upper lobe of their tails keeps a constant flapping on the water. You know how clearly you can hear the flip of a single fish's tail in a pond on a quiet night? Well, to-night you'll hear the sound of fifty thousand. Once, when I was prospecting in the Shoalhaven River district I camped with some net fishermen near the Heads. It was a calm, quiet night like this, and something awakened me. It sounded like heavy rain falling on big leaves. 'Is it raining, mate?' I said to one of the fishermen. 'No,' he replied, 'but there's a heavy thunderstorm gathering; and that noise you hear is mullet coming up from the

Heads, three miles away.' That was the first time I ever saw fish packed so closely together—it was a wonderful sight, and when they began to pass us they stretched in a solid line almost across the river and the noise they made was deafening. But we must hurry up, lad, shift our traps a bit back into the scrub and up with the tent. Then we'll come back and have a look at the fish, and get some for breakfast."

The two hardy prospectors (for such they were) were old and experienced bushmen, and soon had their tent up, and their saddles, blankets and guns and provisions under its shelter, just as the first low muttering of thunder hushed the squealing opossums overhead into silence. But, as it died away, the noise of the myriad mullet sounded nearer and nearer as they swam steadily onward up the river.

Ten minutes passed, and then a heavy thunder-clap shook the mighty trees and echoed and re-echoed among the spurs and gullies of the coastal range twenty miles away; another and another, and from the now leaden sky the rain fell in torrents and continued to pour unceasingly for an hour. Inside the tent the men sat and smoked and waited. Then the downfall ceased with a "snap," the sky cleared as if by magic, revealing the stars now paling before the coming dawn, and the cries of birds resounded through the dripping bush.

Picking up a prospecting dish the elder man told his "mate" that it was time to start. Louder than ever now sounded the noise made by the densely packed masses of fish, and as the rays of the rising sun, aided by a gentle air, dispelled the river mist, the younger

man gave a gasp of astonishment when they reached the bank and he looked down—from shore to shore the water was agitated and churned into foam showing a broad sheet of flapping fins and tails and silvery scales. So close were the fish to the bank and so overcrowded that hundreds stranded upon the sand.

The big man stepped down, picked up a dozen and put them into the dish; then he and his companion sat on the bank and watched the passage of the thousands till the last of them had rounded a bend of the river and the waters flowed silently once more.

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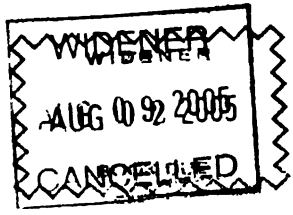
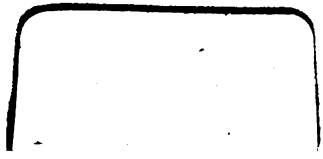
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